

William Jun. - 0 - 2 - 0

C R Y

From the Dead;

OR, THE

G H O S T

OF THE

Famous Mr. *James Guthrie*
appearing.

Being the last S E R M O N he
preached in the Pulpit of *Stirling*, be-
fore his Martyrdom at *Edinburgh*,
June 1661.

To which is added,
His Last S P E E C H upon the Scaffold. His
Ten C O N S I D E R A T I O N S anent
the Decay of Religion: With an Authentick
P A P E R sign'd and writ with his own Hand,
with Relation to the Call of Mr. R O B E R T
R U L E to *Stirling*. Which gives some Light
into the infamous Action of his being stoned, for
rushing Mr. R U L E's Settlement in *Stirling*,
in Opposition to the Publick Resolution Party,
about five Years before his Execution.

G L A S G O W,

Printed by WILLIAM DUNCAN, for WILLIAM
GRAY Merchant in LANERK, MDCCXXXVIII.



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TO THE

READER.

PERHAPS it may be thought somewhat strange, how a Sermon of that great and good Man Mr. *James Guthrie* once Minister of *Stirling*, should come abroad about seventy seven Years after his Death, he having been crown'd with Martyrdom in the Year 1661. The Occasion of its seeing the Light is as follows. *January* this same Year, I had Occasion to be in Company with my worthy and dear Father and Colleague Mr. *Alexander Hamilton* in the Manse of *Stirling*, a few Days before his departure to Glory. And having heard that the Sermon was in his Hand, I took Occasion to enquire at him about it. He told me, That it was not at present in his Custody, having lent it out to a Christian Friend about eighteen Miles distance, but allowed me to send for it, adding, That he would be well pleased it were published. I ask'd him further, of the Way he came by it? To which he replied, That for what he knew, it had lien in the Closet of the Room where he and I were sitting, since Mr. *Guthrie's* Incumbency, until one Day he fell upon it, as he was turning over some old Papers, which had lien there he knew not how long.

SOME Days after Mr. *Hamilton's* Death, I wrote for it, according to his Direction, and had it sent to me accordingly. And that same authentick Copy writ, as I was told, by Mr. *Guthrie's* own Hand, goes to the Press. The only Reason of its lying so long in Obscurity beside me, is the Throng of other Work which necessarily devolved upon me in this Place, after the loss of my Brother Colleague, still intending when Time allowed, to say something by way of Preface: But the same Strait continuing upon me, I'm obliged after all, through the importunate Cries of many who have heard of it, to let it go with saying little or nothing. Only I regard it as a Piece of Honour put upon me in holy Providence, not only to be the unworthy Successor of that great Man, but the Publisher of the last Sermon that ever he preached in the Pulpit of *Stirling*: Where it is my Desire, the same Testimony of Jesus, for which he suffered unto Death, may be maintained unto the latest Posterity

WHAT may be in the Womb of this Providence of the Resurrection of Mr. *Guthrie's* last Sermon in *Stirling*, after it has been so long buried with himself in the Dust and Rubbish, God only knows, and Time must discover: Only considering the Way of its Resurrection and Conveyance, it looks like a *Cry from the Dead* to the whole Land; but in a particular Manner, to the Congregation of *Stirling*, upon whose Watch-tower it was delivered.

I have thought the Manner of the Conveyance of this Sermon to publick View at this Time of Day, one of the curious Links of the great Chain of Divine Providence. The Reverend Mr. *Alexander Hamilton* when he was but a Youth at the College

College of *Edinburgh*, from a just Regard he had to the Memory of Mr. *Guthrie*, and the Cause in which he suffered, was excited at the Peril of his Life to take down with his own Hand Mr. *Guthrie's* Head from the *Netherbow-Port* of *Edinburgh*, where it had stood as a publick Spectacle for about Twenty seven or Twenty eight Years. The very same Person is ordered Thirty eight Years thereafter to succeed him in the Ministry, and uphold his Testimony in the Pulpit of *Stirling* for the Space of Twelve Years. And altho' a good many Ministers, both of the Presbyterian and Episcopal Perswasion had possessed the Manse of *Stirling* since the Death of Mr. *Guthrie*; yet none of them are directed to discover his Farewell Sermon in *Stirling*, until the same Hand is employed, which was honoured to take down his Head, and to give it a decent and honourable Burial.

I make no doubt, but the above Remark will appear whimsical and contemptible, as well as the Sermon it self, in the Eyes of a Generation of Men in our Day, *who are wise in their own Eyes*: But whatever may be the Sentiments of Men, whose *Minds the God of this World hath blinded*; yet the Work of the Lord is honourable and glorious, and *will be fought out of all them that have Pleasure therein. Who so is wise, and observeth these things, even they shall understand the loving Kindness of the Lord.* But how awful is the Certification to those, who shut their Eyes and Ears against the Appearances of God in his providential Dispensations? Psal. xxviii. 5. *Because they regard not the Works of the Lord, nor the Operations of his Hand, he shall destroy them, and not build them up.*

As some have been longing and crying for the Publication of this Sermon; so I'm apt to believe,
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some others will wish, that it and the other Papers of the worthy Author which come along with it, had been buried in Silence for ever. Neither needs this appear strange. His Testimony when alive, tormented the Men who then dwelt upon Earth to that Degree, as to stone this great Seer in *Israel*, and afterward to imbrue their Hands in his Blood: And therefore, it cannot be very easie or pleasant to those who are treading in the same Steps, by attempting the Burial of that Cause and Work of Reformation for which he suffered Martyrdom, to hear his Voice crying from under the Altar, or his dying Testimony again staring them openly in the Face.

I make no doubt to say, It was the Testimony of Jesus for which this faithful Martyr Mr. *James Guthrie* suffered. What that Testimony was, will partly cast up from the following Papers, all of them compiled by him, when drawing nigh to Eternity. The Sermon was preached, *August 19th, 1660.* and he imprisoned the *Thursday* thereafter. His Paper, intituled, *Considerations anent the Danger of Religion, and the Work of Reformation, &c.* was published by himself that very same Year. The third Paper is his Speech upon the Scaffold the Year following. By these and his other Papers and Contendings, contained in Mr. *Woodrow's* History, *he being dead, yet speaketh* unto the living. And it will be easie for the judicious and serious Reader, to discern who are in our Day bearing up, and who are bearing down, and burying the Cause for which he contended unto Blood.

T H E R E is a loud Cry raised against a few Ministers, who are associated together for Reformation, as if they were Schismatics and Separatists,

tists, tho' they were at first shut out and separate from their Brethren, because they could not abandon the Word of their Testimony, emitted for the Covenanted Reformation of *Scotland*, sealed with the Blood of this and many other Worthies. But, in my humble Opinion, these only are to be deem'd Separatists, be they few or many, who separate from the Truth, and who do not hold the Head Christ Jesus, and the Order he hath established in his House. It has been made evident in a printed Act and Testimony, wherein the present Judicatories, and the whole Land, have departed from that Truth and Order. The only Thing demanded by these Brethren in order to a harmonious Coalition, is the Reformation of these Corruptions, and a purging out of these Scandals by which the whole Lump is in hazard of being leavened. In stead of a Compliance with so just and reasonable a Demand; further and higher Steps of Defection are every Year gone into, and Measures laid by the last Assembly for burying them and their Testimony both. Whither this be a holding fast Deceit, and a refusing to return to the Lord, is easie to judge. And in this Case the Command is plain, Jer. xv. 19. *Let them return unto thee, but return not thou unto them.*

WHEN the Reformation of Corruptions, and the purging out of evident Scandals is the only Condition demanded, what can be the Reason that it is not granted? One of the two it must needs be, viz. either because the Judicatories will not; or else because they cannot reform. If it be because they will not, they are to be withdrawn from as Wicked. If it be because they cannot, or want Power, it says, The Keys of Discipline is taken from them, and that they are not Christ's Officers

Officers and Stewards. The Discipline of Christ's Appointment must needs be a sufficient Means for the Preservation and Reformation of his own House. In both these Cases, the judicious *Owen* is of Opinion, a Church is to be separate from. The Reason is plain, because She is separate from the Head, whom we are to hold at any Rate, tho' it were to the loss of Communion with the whole World.

I'm apt to think, that the two Horns of the above Dilemma, are sufficient to overthrow Mr. *Currie's* voluminous Essay upon Separation. By which, in the Opinion of many, he has destroyed these Things which formerly he built up. But the Fallacy and Weakness of his Reasonings, and the Injuries he has done, both to Acts of Assemblies, and particular Authors, I hope, in a short Time, may be sufficiently exposed. Had I been favoured with a Sight of the Manuscript before Publication, and a few Hours Converse with my Dear and Worthy Brother, according to wonted Intimacy and Freedom, without boasting, I persuade my self, it had never seen the Light. I value the Man, I'm sorry for his Conduct; and pray for his Recovery. But want of Time, as was hinted above, and fear of swelling the Pamphlet, obliges me to forbear several other Things I inclin'd to say.

THAT the same Spirit of God, and of Glory, which enabled the worthy Author of the following Papers to contend unto Death, for the Royal Prerogatives of his great Master, the only Head, King, and Law-giver of his Church, may in the perusal of his following Testimonies, enter into the Soul of every *Reader*, is the Prayer and Desire of him who is

Thine in the Work of the Gospel
of Christ Jesus,
EBENEZER ERSKINE.

Stirling, Aug. 14.
1738.

A

S E R M O N

Preached at STIRLING

By Mr. James Guthrie,

On the Sabbath-Day in the Forenoon, being the 19. of *August*, 1660. Upon the 22. Verse of the 14. Chapter of *Matthew*. He did also read the 23. and 24. Verses of the same Chapter: but had not Occasion to preach any more: he being imprisoned the *Thursday* thereafter.

Text. * MATTH. xiv. Chap. 22, 23, 24, Verses

And straightway Jesus constrained his Disciples to get into a Ship, and to go before him unto the other side, while he sent the Multitudes away.

23. *And when he had sent the Multitudes away, he went up into a Mountain apart to pray; and when the Evening was come, he was there alone.*

24. *But the Ship was now in the midst of the Sea, tossed with Waves: for the Wind was contrary.*

IT is of Purpose, and by Choice, in reference to the Condition and Trial of these Times, we have resolved, through the Lord's Assistance,

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* *Mark* vi. 46. *John* vi. and 16. Verse.

to speak somewhat of this * Piece of Trial, and of the Storm wherewith the Disciples of our Lord Jesus Christ were exercised at Sea, and the rather we have chosen to speak somewhat of these Word, because they were the choice of a very precious and worthy Man, to speak of in a Day of Trial, I mean, of that eminent Servant of God, JOHN KNOX, whom the Lord did help to be a most eminent Instrument of the Work of Reformation in the Church; we shall not much stand on any particular unfolding of the Branches of the Text, but take these as they ly in order. The Thing we desire you first to look to, is, How the Story that is recorded in these Verses, is knit with these that go before, for we will find them knit together by many of the Evangelists, viz. the Story of the glorious Miracles wrought by Jesus Christ the Lord, in feeding so many Thousands of People with a few Loaves, and a few little Fishes, after this that sad Trial which the Disciples met with at Sea: They are knit together by the Evangelist *Matthew, Mark, and John*, after that the Lord Jesus Christ had preached to the People and his Disciples, and had fed many Thousands with a few Loaves, and a few Fishes, and had manifested much of his Power and Glory, (*He constrains his Disciples to get into a Ship, and to go before him unto the other side, while he sent the Multitude away*) he sends his Disciples to the Sea, and the Multitude away, that they should not for a Season hear any more of his Doctrine, and see any more of his Miracles.

THAT we may lay a Foundation for somewhat for your Edification. *First*, It may be enquired, *Why it is that he sends away both his Disciples and the Multitude at that Time, and would have*

* The Causes of his choicing of this Text.

have an Interruption of his Doctrine and Miracles, when he sends his Disciples to the Sea, and the Multitude to their own Home? If we look the other Evangelists, we will find the Causes there enough, Mark vi. 52. the Cause is given there, why he thus exercised his Disciples, (For they considered not the Miracle of the Loaves, for their Hearts were hardened.) Albeit, the Lord Jesus Christ had revealed much of his Power and Glory in the Miracle of the Loaves; yet his Disciples did not duly consider thereof: Therefore he would needs Exercise them with a Storm, and a Tempest at Sea, that they might both be Taught in the Knowledge of their own Weakness, and also might be better School'd in the Faith of his Power and Glory. The Reason why he sent the Multitude away, is set down in the Gospel written by John, Chap. vi. 26. *When the Multitude comes again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek me, not because ye saw the Miracles, but because ye did eat of the Loaves, and were filled.* Compare it with that in the 15. Verse, *When Jesus Christ therefore perceived that they would come and take him by force, to make him a King, he departed again into a Mountain himself alone.* He knew that for all that they had seen and heard of his Word and Miracles, they were of a very carnal Disposition, and seeking to establish to themselves carnal Prosperity and Peace: Therefore he sent them away for a Time.

FROM the Connection of these two Histories, and from the Scope of the whole, we offer you one Point of Doctrine; That the Lord Jesus Christ is oft Times, and ordinarily pleased after special Manifestations of his Power and Glory in his Church, and amongst his People, to exercise them with special pieces of Trial, and Troubles, and Storms.

Storms. After his doing of great Work for their Comfort, he is ordinarily pleased, to raise great and dreadful Storms and Tempests, for their Exercise and Trial. So here, when he hath in a most comfortable, and kindly way, banqueted them, and revealed much of his Power and Love in so doing, he sends them a Storm and Tempest, on the back of it, and will have an Interruption of his Doctrine and Miracles for a Time, wherein they are all like to be drowned.

1st Instance. There are many Instances in the Word, of the Lord's dealing thus; look in the Books of *Moses*, what follows on the back of that glorious Deliverance, that the Lord gave to the People of *Israel* out of *Egypt*; they are exercised 40 Years in the Wilderness, in which they had many a sad Day, ere they entred the Land of *Canaan*.

2d Inst. THE like we may see in the Church of *Israel*, *1 Sam.* The Lord gave a great Deliverance from the *Philistines* by the Ministry of his Servant *Samuel*, and a glorious blessed work of Reformation there was, but all that was again destroyed by the Hand of *Saul*, and Persecution raised against the Church of God.

3d Inst. A third Instance ye will find, if ye will read the History of the Reign of *Hezekiah* and *Manasseh* Kings of *Judah*, as it is recorded in the second Book of *Chronicles*, there was a great Reformation in the Days of *Hezekiah*, A Covenant sworn by the King, Princes, Priests, and the whole Body of the Land; All Corruption cast out, the pure Worship and Ordinances of God set up, but there was a dreadful Trial by the Hand of *Sennacherib*; so scarcely was *Hezekiah* well in his Grave, till *Manasseh* succeeds in his Room, and brings in Corruption and Persecution, both at once.

4th Inst. A fourth Instance was in the Days of *Josiah*, how much of the Power, and Glory of the Lord is manifested; but how sad a Trial comes on the Back of it, that the Church seems to be wholly defaced by the King of *Babylon*.

5th Inst. A fifth Instance we will find, after the Return of *Israel* out of *Babylon*; in the *4th* of *Ezra*, the Foundation of the Lord's House is laid: But in a little while the Work is interrupted, (till the second Year of *Darius* the King) by the Derision and Enmity of wicked Men,

6th Inst. A like Instance you shall also find in the New Testament; look what a Length our blessed LORD brought the Work of the Gospel, but what follows in the 16. of *John*, 31. and 32. verses, *Do ye now believe? Behold the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave me alone.* And he is crucified, and laid in his Grave, and a Stone laid on the Grave's Mouth, and little Appearance that ever there should have been more mention of him, in the Land of the Living.

7th Inst. THEN look another Instance in the Days of the Apostles in the 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5, Chapters of the *Acts*, what a blessed Reformation there was, but in the Close of the *6th* Chapter, and in the Beginning of the *8th*, ye see what a sad Interruption and Scattering is in the Church, and a great Persecution raised against it.

8th Inst. AND as there are many Instances in the Word, so there are many Instances in the Story of the Church, many great Things were done by the Apostles, and a glorious Reformation there was in the bringing in of the *Gentiles*; but how dreadful a Persecution is raised through all the World

9th Inst. AND there is a notable Instance, when the Lord began to reform the Church from
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the Darknes of *Poperie*, by that worthy Instrument *Luther*: But shortly after, did not *Charles* the fifth raise a cruel War, against all the Princes of *Germany*, and raised cruel Edicts against all that clave to the Church.

10th *Inst.* A N D also, in the Days of King *Edward* the sixth, That good Prince, what a glorious Work was in *England*; but few Years after that godly Prince died, Queen *Mary* succeeds, brings in *Poperie*, and raises a bitter Persecution against the Saints of God.

11th *Inst.* A N D, ye cannot be so great Strangers to your own Condition at Home; How sad an Interruption the Work of Reformation met with, from the Prelates not long ago.

S o that there is nothing more ordinary in the Church; than after the Lord has communicate himself in a special way in his Power and Glory, than to exercise them with sad Storms and Tempests on the Back of it.

C O N C E R N I N G this Dispensation, we would first, enquire a little into the Grounds and Reasons of it, why the Lord sees it fit to do so? Next, into the Kinds of it, or in what several Ways it is, that he sees it fit so to do?

F O R the Reasons, Grounds and Causes of it, we shall not speak of many, though many might be spoken of, but shortly touch some of the most common and obvious.

1st *Reason.* F I R S T, The Lord makes such a Changing of his Dealing, with his Church, for the chastising of their Sin, and correcting of their Iniquity. A People to whom he manifests himself in his Power and Glory, and Mercy and Truth, do not always behave themselves as they ought to do, but even while he is dealing kindly with them they do many ways provoke him to Wrath. Therefore God
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for correcting their Sin, and chastising their Iniquity, brings Troubles and Storms upon them. In the 99. *Psalms*, the Lord is brought to take Vengeance on the Inventions of his People in the Wilderness; that ye may understand this the better, look the 78. *Psalms*, which is a clear Commentary to this, where his Rod where with he punished that People in the Wilderness, and delayed their Entrance into *Canaan*, and their Sin both are set down: Their Unstedfastness in the Lord's Covenant. Ye may look some of the Proofs of these Sins.

1st Sin. FIRST, In the 10. and 11. verses of *Psalms* 78. *They kept not the Covenant of God, and refused to walk in his Law: And forgot his Works, and Wonders that he had shewed them.* They were unstedfast in the Lord's Covenant in the 19. and 20. Chapter of *Exodus*; They entred in a most solemn Covenant with God, that all of them undertook to stand to, and to prove faithful therein, but they kept not his Covenant, but dealt deceitfully in it, therefore he brought such Storms on them in the Wilderness, and so long suspended their Entrance in the promised Land.

2d Sin. A second Sin is, in the 18. verse they sinned yet more, *and tempted him in their Hearts, by asking Meat for their Lusts.* They are not satisfied, with the things that God has allowed them, but lusted after strange things, and became lustful in their Appetites: Therefore God is wroth, and thus exerciseth them in the Wilderness,

3d Sin. A third Sin is, in the 22. verse, their Diffidence and Unbelief; they believed not God, and trusted not in his Salvation; they put tempting Questions, concerning his Power and Goodness in the 19. verse, *Can God furnish a Table in the Wilderness?* Therefore he thus exercised them with Storms.

4th Sin. 'A fourth Sin is, They despised and undervalued the precious *Manna*, which God sent down from Heaven, for feeding of them, Numb. xxi. 5. *Our Souls lothed this light Bread.*

5th Sin. A fifth Sin is, Their murmuring, grudging and repining against God.

6th Sin. A Sixth Sin is, Their Complaint of coming out of *Egypt*; their rebelling and speaking of a Captain to return back again.

7th Sin. T H E last Sin is, Their corrupting the Worship of God, and making a golden Calf. And because of these Sins, the Lord is angry, and correcteth and chastises them forty Years long in the Wilderness.

2d Reason. A second Reason is, The Lord's bringing sad Storms on the back of glorious Manifestations of himself in his Word and Works, is, for purging of his People. As he will correct them, and have them to know the bitterness of their Sin, so he will have them to be purged of it. There is a sad Trial in the II. of *Daniel*, and this is given as the Reason of it; To purge, to try, and to make white, In the 35. Verse, *And some of them of Understanding shall fall, to try them, and to purge, and to make them white, even to the time of the End: Because it is yet for a time appointed.* There is in the Church and People of God, much Dross, therefore he sees it necessary, they be put to the Fire, for purging away of their Dross.

3d Reason. A third Reason, wherefore the Lord brings sad Storms, on the Back of glorious Manifestations, of himself, is, for discovering and bringing forth the Hypocrites, and such as are unsound, *Daniel* xi. 34. Many cleave to the Lord's People by Flattery: Especially, it's so, when the Lord is eminently appearing, and revealing himself gloriously in his Word and Works; Many then undertake a
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Profession in whose Hearts there is no Sincerity and Truth; many then cleave to the Cause and Work of God by Flattery, which his Soul cannot endure; therefore he brings a winnowing Fan, and lets them up before the Wind, that he may know who is Chaff and who is Corn. *Psal. cxxv. 4. and 5. verses. He doth good to those that are upright in Heart: but as for such as turn aside to crooked ways, the Lord shall lead them forth with the workers of Iniquity.* Therefore for Discovery of such, he sends sad Storms on the back of Reformation.

ANOTHER Reason of the Lord's bringing sad Storms and Tempests on his People, on the back of glorious Manifestations of himself, is, that he may prove and take a Trial of the Integrity, Faith, and Patience of his Saints; and in trying of them to purchase Glory to himself, and a Name to them. *1. Pet. i. and 7. That the Trial of your Faith (being much more precious than of Gold that perisheth, though it be tried with Fire,) might be found unto Praise, and Honour, and Glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ.*

THERE is also a Reason, concerning Adversaries, which we shall not now meddle with.

BUT we come to the second Point, how it is, or in what several sorts of ways it is, that the Lord is pleased thus to dispense, I mean, to send Storms and Trials on his Servants and People, immediately on the back of some glorious Appearance, and notable Works of Kindness and Mercy amongst them. There might be a great many ways named, how the Lord is pleased to do thus, we shall name only four generals.

1st. way, FIRST, he does it sometime by interrupting of his Work. Thus he did it in that place cited before, *Exra iv.* After the Foundation of the Lord's House is laid, a Company of malignant Men, Enemies to the poor People of God, and his
B Work,

Work, who are exceeding ill satisfied, that the Work of God should prosper, they come by all Means to interrupt the Work of God, and when they could not prevail by Flattery, they go to the King of *Persia*, and load the People of God with false Aspersions, that they were about to rebel, &c. by which Suggestions, they obtain Letters from the King, commanding them to cease building of the Temple, and when the Copy of the King's Letters was read, they made them to cease by Force and Power, &c.

2d. Way, A second way is, by Corruption, when he suffers evil Instruments, not only to make an Interruption, but to make a Corruption so to speak, and to mingle these with the Purity of his Ordinances and Worship. God raises up ill Instruments, to make People lick up the Vomit of these Corruptions, which have been formerly cast out. There had been a blessed Reformation in the Days of *Hezekiah*, and all Corruption cast out, but all that Corruption, is brought in again in the Days of *Manasseh*, and more and worse than ever had been before.

3d. Way, A third way is, by Destruction, so to speak; Not only, when the Work of God is interrupted, and corrupted, but when it is destroyed and taken away. There is in the Days of *Zedekiah*, a total destroying of the Temple, and all the Work.

THE fourth way is, by Persecution to these that cleave to the Truth and Work of God; Thus it was in the Days of the Apostles, *Acts* v. They fall on the Ministers of the Lord's House, and slays some of them with the Sword, and puts others in Prison; so that they could not preach the Word in *Jerusalem*. Some one, or all of these ways, the Lord sets on Foot such Dispensations.

1st Use.

1st Use. WE would now speak somewhat of the Use we would make of it. And, *First*, It says this to us, that we of this Church and Nation, would be looking for a Storm; the Lord hath been graciously pleased to make glorious Discoveries of his Power and Mercy in his Word and Works amongst us, now thir many Years, and even on that Account, we would be looking for a Storm; and we shall give you these few Reasons wherefore we would look for it.

1st Reason. BECAUSE (as I told you) it's ordinary with God in his Dispensations to his People, to knit these two together, with great Manifestations of his Mercy, to bring Troubles, Tempests and Trials, as ye will find frequently in the Word.

2d Reasf. A Second Reason wherefore we would look for a Storm, is, because we are guilty of these Sins, that bring on Storms on the Church, and People of God. We have told you what Storms came on *Israel* in the Wilderness, after their coming out of *Egypt*; and we have told you their Sin that brought them on; unstedfastness in the Lord's Covenant, murmuring against God, tempting of God, Diffidence and Unbelief; despising and loathing of the precious Manna, their rebelling against God, their corrupting of the Worship and Ordinances of God, &c. See if we be not Guilty of all these Sins: Have we not been unstedfast in the Covenant? Is not the Obligation thereof in great Measure forgotten? and who has remembered to perform his Vow unto the Lord, almost in any thing, either in the National, or Solemn League and Covenant? Are we not guilty of lusting, and not satisfied with the Things that God hath given us, but the Heart is carried away with the Lust of the Eyes, the Lust of the Flesh, and the Pride

of Life? Are we not guilty of repining against God? Are we not guilty of despising and loathing the precious Manna of the Gospel? Are we not guilty of Misbelief and Tempting of God? Are we not guilty of corrupting of the Ordinances of God and spoiling many of his precious Truths? And are there not many speaking of making a Captain to return again to *Egypt*, and to involve themselves in the Bondage of all these Corruptions which have been formerly cast out, and engaged against in the Covenant; and if for these things God brought Storms on them, how shall we avoid them.

Reas. 3d. A third Thing that says there is a Storm coming, is, because these amongst whom he doth eminently manifest himself he doth also eminently try them, that he may bring forth their Faith and Patience. We have had Trials, but none of us have resisted unto Blood, they have been but fresh Water Trials: The Trials are not answerable to these eminent Dispensations enjoyed. We have but run with the Foot-men, and have not yet contended with the Horse-men, we have not yet swim'd in the swellings of Jordan, *Jeremiah* 12. 5.

Reas. 4th. A fourth Thing that says that there is a Storm coming, is, because that there is among us a Huge Multitude of hollow hearted Men joyned in the Covenant with treacherous Hearts, the Lord hath brought forth many of these already, but it's like their will be more visible Discoveries, that will make Men disown and disavow the Covenant of God.

Reas. 5. ANOTHER Thing that says ye would look for a Storm, is, because that is already begun: The Wind of the Lord's Fan is already begun to blow; severals who were eminent in the Work

Work of the Lord are imprisored; several Ambassadors of the Lord's House cast out; and doth not this say that their is a Storm coming.

Reas. 6. And *Lastly*, T H I S says, that ye would look for a Storm, because all the wicked, and these that have been Enemies to the People of God are already lifting up the Head; and that is ay the prognostick of a Storm.

Use 2d. THE second Use is. As we would look for a Storm so we would not stumble at it when it comes, because it is the Work of our God, it's the ordinary path Road, that the Lord uses to take or give in his Dispensations to his Church. There are several sorts of Stumblings that Folk fall in, when the Lord is pleased to bring Storms on his Church and People, all of them we would beware of.

Stumbling 1st. First the Stumbling of the Child of *Israel* that we read of, when Storms were like to rise, they Stumble so far as to speak of quitting of the Work of the Lord, and not marching on further to take Possession of the promised Land: And they speak of making a Captain to return back again to *Egypt*: We would fear that that shall be the Stumbling of many in thir Times, that they shall take a Resolution to quite all the Work of God, and the Work of Reformation, and be content to be carried back again to these Corruptions from whence they were (by the Mercy of God) delivered. That is a most dreadful Stumbling, we warn you of it, and we beseech you in the Name of the Lord to take heed to it.

Stumble. 2d. A second Sort of Stumbling that we would beware of, is, the Stumbling of *Doeg the Edomite*, 2 *Sam.* 22. when a Storm was like to arise upon the Church and People of God, he Stumbles so far at these Things as he falls to be an Accuser

Accuser of those that had been employed in the Work of God and walked in their Integrity, to accuse honest holy *David*; and from an Accuser came to be an open Persecuter of the People of God: We would take heed, that for currying of Favour to our selves, we be not Accusers of others; this is the way of many in these Nations, they know no other way of currying of Favour to themselves, but by becoming Accusers of the Saints of God; look to it, for in a while ye will turn open Persecuters; when none would fall on the Priests of the Lord, *Doeg the Edomite* (ere he lost the Favour he had gotten) would fall on them.

3d *Stumbl.* A third Sort of Stumbling that we would beware of, is, The Stumbling of *Shebna*, Treasurer or Scribe, *Isa. 22.* When *Sennacherib* invaded *Judah*, though he pretended Friendship, yet he in a secret way complied with *Sennacherib*, and so far as lay in him supplanted good King *Hezekiah*, and the People of God; we would take heed of that.

4th *Stumbl.* ANOTHER Sort of Stumbling that we would beware of, is, That Stumbling of *Demas*, *2 Tim. 4. 10.* who when a Storm arises, he thought it meet to shift for himself, and embrace this present World. *Demas has forsaken us*, (says *Paul*) *having loved this present World, and is departed unto Thessalonica.* Look we pray you in this Place, to that that is most like to be your Temptation. *viz.* The Lust of the Things of the World, if ye will prove stedfast in the Cause that ye have owned, and therefore we would study to have our Hearts loosed from these Things that will make you Stumble in a stormy Day.

5th *Stumbl.* ANOTHER sort of Stumbling that we would beware of, is, The Stumbling of *Baruch*, *Jer.*

Jer. 45. 3. when he and *Jeremiah* were like to be put to Death, for the Cause that they were engaged unto, he fainted and was afraid, *Wo is me* (says he) *for the Lord has added Grief to my Sorrow, I fainted in my sighing, and I find no rest.* We would take heed that we Faint not, neither be of a fearful Heart, own the Cause of God, and Interest of Jesus Christ. Yea, that carnal Fear carries *Peter* so far as to deny his Lord and Master.

6th Stumbl. W E would beware of the Stumbling of *Judas*, who (when he got not the Thing he would have been at, by the following of Jesus Christ) he resolves to betray his Master. Look that Disappointments in following the Cause of Christ, make you not turn treacherous unto it.

And *Lastly*, W E would beware of the Stumbling of the Men of *Judah*, *Jer. 44.* *Jeremiah* would have had them staying in the Land of *Judah*, and they would not, but would go down to the Land of *Egypt*. And they tell him, *It was better with us* (say they) *when we burnt Incense to the Queen of Heaven, and poured out Drink-offerings unto her, for then had we plenty of Victuals, and were well, and saw no Evil.* We would take heed that nothing make us to call in Question the Cause of God, that we have been engaged into.

3d Use. A third Use, If it be so, that Tempests and Storms are like to blow, then we would be careful to prepare for them.

A few Things we would name, that we would look to for preparing of us.

First, W E would study, to have our Ship as light of all unnecessary Burdens, as we can; I mean, all Things of a present World, all Things beside

beside God, and our precious Soul; we would have as little Weight of these Things on our Spirits as we may, for they will sink our Ship in a Storm.

2^{ly}. **W E** would be careful to make Friendship with Jesus Christ that blessed Pilot, that we may get him in the Ship with us, for we are not able to steer our Ship in a Storm.

3^{ly}. **W E** would be careful to keep a low Sail, to have our Spirits humble and low before the Lord, for the humble Soul is most like to hold out, when the Wind and Storm blows.

4^{ly}. **W E** would be careful to get the Knowledge of the Cause that we profess; for indeed a dark Night is ill to sail in, when the Wind blows, and when there are quick Sands before us,

And *Lastly*, **W E** would be careful to have our ship well ballasted with the Faith and Patience of the Saints.

Use 4. **W E** would consider what grounds of Consolation we shall have for strengthening of our Hearts, if we bide fast by the Cause of Jesus Christ, for the biding out of a Storm, if so be God be pleased to bring it on us.

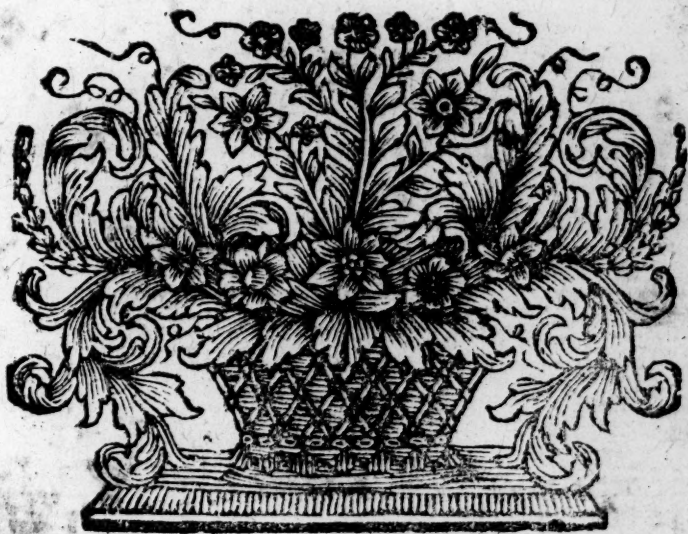
W E might name many, only at this time take these few. The first Ground of Encouragement, is, that you have a good Cause, I mean the Cause of God, and the Interest of Jesus Christ, speak against it who will, forsake it who will, Reproach and Persecute it who will, Doubtless, Good is the Cause, the Cause is worth the contending for, worth the Suffering any Thing that can come for it.

2^{ly}. **A N O T H E R** Thing to be a Ground of Comfort to us, is, as we have a good Cause, so we have a good Captain too, Jesus Christ the Lord, who is the Captain and Prince of Salvation, who

who was never put to the Worse, and who sits at the Right-hand of the Father, and will Reign there till he make all his Enemies his Foot-stool.

3^d. ANOTHER Thing to be a Ground of Consolation to us, is, as we have a good Cause, and a good Captain, so we have good Company too, all in whose Hearts the Fear of the Lord is in these three Nations, yea more, we have all the Saints that have lived since the Beginning of the World; for all the Cause they have owned and suffered for, is one and the same, though there be sundry Branches of it; we have also the blessed Promises of God, and we have the Experience of all the Saints; we have also our own Experiences, and many things more of that kind. O that we knew our Priviledges, for strengthening of our Hearts to be sincere and stedfast in his work. And so we close.

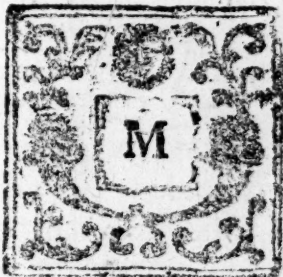
F I N I S.



5 AUG 63



*Mr. James Guthrie's last
Speech upon the Scaffold,
June 1. 1661.*



EN and Brethren, I fear many of you are come hither to gaze, rather than to be edified by the Carriage and last Words of a dying Man: But if any have an Ear to hear, as I hope some of this great Confluence have, I desire your Audience to a few Words. I am come hither to lay down this earthly Tabernacle and mortal Flesh of mine, and, I bless God, through his Grace, I do it willingly, and not by constraint. I say, I suffer willingly: If I had been so minded, I might have made a Diversion, and not been a Prisoner; but being conscious to my self of nothing worthy of Death, or of Bonds, I would not stain my Innocency with

with the Suspicion of Guiltiness, by withdrawing: Neither have I wanted Opportunities and Advantages to escape since I was a Prisoner, not by the Fault of my Keepers, (God knoweth) but otherwise; but neither for this had I Light or Liberty, least I should reflect upon the Lord's Name, and offend the Generation of the Righteous: And if some Men have not been mistaken, or dealt deceitfully in telling me so, I might have avoided not only the Severity of the Sentence, but also had much Favour and Countenance, by complying with the Courses of the Times. But I durst not redeem my Life with the loss of my Integrity; God knoweth, I durst not; and that since I was a Prisoner, he hath so holden me by the Hand, that he never suffered me to bring it in debate in my inward Thoughts, much less to propone or hearken to any Overture of that kind. I did judge it better to suffer, than to sin; And therefore, I am come hither, to lay down my Life this Day, and I bless God, I die not as a Fool; not that I have any thing wherein to glory in my self: I acknowledge that I am a Sinner, yea, one of the greatest and vilest that has owned a Profession of Religion, and one of the most unworthy that has preached the Gospel. My Corruptions have been strong and many, and have made me a Sinner in all Things, yea, even in following my Duty; And therefore, Righteousness have I none of my own, all is vile. But I do believe that *Jesus Christ came into the World to save Sinners, whereof I am chief*: Through Faith in his Righteousness and Blood have I obtained Mercy; and through him, and in him alone, have I the hope of a blessed Conquest and

Victory

Victory over Sin and Satan, and Hell and Death, and that I shall attain unto the Resurrection of the just; and be made partaker of eternal Life. *I know in whom I have believed, and that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that Day.* I have preached Salvation through his Name, and as I have preached, so do I believe, and do commend the Riches of his free Grace and Faith in his Name unto you all, as the only Way whereby ye can be saved.

A N D, as I bless the L O R D, that I die not as a Fool; so also, that I die not for Evil-doing. Not a few of you may haply judge that I suffer as a Thief, or as a Murderer, or as an Evil-doer, or as a Busie-body in other Mens Matters. It was the Lot of the L O R D J E S U S C H R I S T himself, and hath been of many of his precious Servants and People, to suffer by the World as Evil-doers; and as my Soul scareth not at it, but desireth to rejoyce in being brought into Conformity with my blessed Head, and so blessed a Company, in this Thing; So I desire and pray, that I may be to none of you to Day upon this Account a Stone of Stumbling, and a Rock of Offence. Blessed is he that shall not be offended at J E S U S C H R I S T, and his poor Servants and Members, because of their being condemned as Evil-doers by the World. G O D is my Record, that in these Things for which Sentence of Death hath passed against me, I have a good Conscience. I bless G O D, they are not Matters of Compliance with Sectaries, or Designs, or Practises, against His Majesty's Person or Government, or the Person and Government of his Royal Father:

ther: My Heart (I blefs G O D) is conscious to no Difloyalty, nay, Loyal I have been, and I commend it to you to be Loyal, and Obedient in the L O R D. True Piety is the Foundation of true Loyalty: A wicked Man may be a Flatterer, and a Time-server, but he will never be a Loyal Subject. But to return to my Purpose; the Matters for which I am condemned, are Matters belonging to my Calling and Function, as a Minister of the Gospel, such as the Discovery and reproving of Sin, the pressing and the holding fast of the Path of G O D in the Covenant, and preserving and carrying the Work of Religion, and Reformation according thereto, and denying to acknowledge the Civil Magistrate, as the proper competent immediate Judge in Causes Ecclesiastical: That in all these Things, (which G O D so ordering by his gracious Providence) are the Grounds of my Indictment and Death, I have a good Conscience, as having walked therein according to the Light and Rule of G O D's Word, and as did become a Minister of the Gospel.

I do also blefs the L O R D, that I do not die as one not desired. I know that by not a few, I neither have been, nor am desired. It hath been my Lot to have been a Man of Contention and Sorrow; but it is my Comfort, that for my own Things I have not contended, but for *the Things of Jesus Christ*, for what relateth to his Interest and Work, and the Well-being of his People. In order to the preserving and promoting of these, I did protest against, and stood in Opposition unto these late Assemblies at *St. Andrews, Dundee, and Edinburgh*, and the Publick Resolutions, for
bringing

bringing the Malignant Party into the Judicatories, and Armies of this Kingdom, conceiving the same contrary to the Word of G O D, and to our Solemn Covenant Engagements; and to be an in-let to the Defection, and to the Ruin, and Destruction of the Work of God. And it is now manifest to many Consciences, that I have not been therein mistaken, nor was not fighting against a Man of Straw: I was also desirous, and did use some poor Endeavours, to have the Church of G O D purged of insufficient and scandalous, and corrupt Ministers, and Elders; for these Things I have been mistaken by some, and hated by others: But I bless the L O R D, as I had the Testimony of my own Conscience, so I was and am therein approven in the Consciences of many of the L O R D's precious Servants and People; and however so little I may die desired by some, yet by these I know I do die desired, and their Approbation and Prayers, and Affection is of more value with me, than the Contradiction or Reproach, or Hatred of many others; the Love of the one, I cannot Recompense, and the Mistake or Hatred, or Reproach of the other, I do with all my Heart forgive; and wherein I have offended any of them, I do beg their Mercy and Forgiveness. I do from my Soul wish, that my Death may be profitable unto both, that the one may be confirmed and established in the straight Ways of the L O R D; and that the other, if the L O R D so will, may be convinced, and cease from these Things that are not good, and do not edifie but destroy.

ONE Thing I would warn you all of, That
G O D

GOD is wroth, yea, very wroth with *Scotland*, and threatneth to depart and remove his Candlestick. The Causes of his Wrath are many, and would to GOD it were not one great Cause, that Causes of Wrath are despised and rejected of Men. Consider the Cause that is recorded, *Jer. xxxvi.* and the Consequence of it, and tremble and fear. I cannot but also say, That there is a great Addition and Increase of Wrath; *First*, By that Deluge of Profanity that overfloweth all the Land, and hath Reins loosed unto it every where, in so far that many have lost, not only all Use and Exercise of Religion, but even of Morality, and that common Civility that is to be found amongst the Heathen. *Second*, By that horrible Treachery and Perjury that is in the Matter of the Covenant, and Cause of GOD, and Work of Reformation: *Be astonished, O ye Heavens, at this, and be ye horribly afraid, and be ye very desolate, saith the Lord; for my People have committed two great Evils, they have forsaken me the Fountain of Waters, and hewed them out Cisterns, broken Cisterns, that can hold no Waters:* Shall he break the Covenant and prosper? *Shall the Throne of Iniquity have Fellowship with God, which frameth Mischief by a Law?* I fear the LORD be about to bring a Sword on these Lands, which shall avenge the Quarrel of his Covenant. *Third*, Horrible Ingratitude, the LORD after ten Years Oppression, and Bondage, hath broken the Yoke of Strangers from off our Necks: But what do we render unto him for this Goodness? Most of the Fruit of our Delivery is, to work Wickedness, and to strengthen our selves to do Evil. *Fourth*, A most dreadful Idolatry, and sacrificing
to

to the Creature, we have *changed the Glory of the incorruptible God, into the Image of corruptible Man*, in whom many have placed almost all their Salvation and Desire, and have turned that which might have been a Blessing unto us, (being kept in a due Line of Subordination under G O D) into an Idol of Jealousie, by preferring it before him. G O D is also wroth with a Generation of carnal, corrupt, Time-serving Ministers; I know and bear Testimony, that in the Church of *Scotland*, there is a true and faithful Ministry: Blessed be G O D, we have yet many, who study their Duty, and desire to be found Faithful to their L O R D and Master; and I pray you to Honour, and Reverence, and Esteem much of these for their Works sake; and I pray them to be encouraged in their L O R D and Master, who is with them, to make them as Iron Pillars and Brazen Walls, and as a strong defenced City in the faithful following of their Duty: But, Oh! that there were not too many, who mind *earthly Things*, and are *Enemies to the Cross of Jesus Christ*, who push with the Side and Shoulder, who strengthen the Hands of Evil-doers, who make themselves Transgressors, by studying to build again what they did formerly warrantably destroy; I mean Prelacy, and the Ceremonies, and the Service Book, a Mystery of Iniquity that works amongst us, whose Steps lead unto the House of the great Whore *Babylon, the Mother of Fornication*; or whosoever else he be that buildeth this *Jericho* again, let him take heed of the Curse of *Hiel*, the *Bethelite*, and of that flying Roll threatened, *Zech. v.* And let all Ministers take heed that they watch, and be stedfast in the Faith;

and quit themselves like Men, and be strong; and give faithful and seasonable Warning, concerning Sin and Duty. Many of the L O R D's People do sadly complain of the Fainting and Silence of many Watchmen, and it concerneth them to consider what G O D calleth for at their Hands in such a Day: Silence now in a Watchman, when he is so much called to speak, and give his Testimony, upon the Peril of his Life, is doubtless a great Sin. The L O R D open the Mouths of his Servants, to speak his Word with all Boldness, that Covenant breaking may be discovered and reproved, and that the Kingdom of J E S U S C H R I S T may not be supplanted, nor the Souls of his People be destroyed without a Witness. I have but a few Words more to add: All that are profane amongst you, I exhort them to Repentance, for the Day of the L O R D's Vengeance hastneth, and is near; but there is yet a Door of Mercy open for you, if you will not despise the Day of Salvation. All that are Maligners, and Reproachers, and Persecutors of Godliness, and of such as live godly, take heed what ye do; it will be hard for you to kick against the Pricks; you make your selves the Butt of the L O R D's Fury, and his flaming Indignation, if you do not cease from, and repent of all your hard Speeches and ungodly Deeds. All that are neutral, and indifferent, and lukewarm Professors, be zealous and repent, lest the L O R D *spue you out of his Mouth*. You that lament after the L O R D, and mourn for all the Abominations that are done in this City, and in the Land, and take Pleasure in the Stones and Dust of Zion, cast not away your Confidence, but be comforted, and

and encouraged in the LORD; he will yet appear to your Joy: GOD hath not cast away his People, nor Work in *Britain and Ireland*, I hope it shall once more revive by the Power of his Spirit, and take Root downward, and bear Fruit upward, and of this I am now confident. There is yet a holy Seed and precious Remnant, whom GOD will preserve, and bring forth: But how long or dark our Night may be, I do not know, - the LORD shorten it for the sake of his Chosen. In the mean while, be ye patient, and *stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the Work of the LORD*, and in Love one to another; beware of Snares which are strawed thick; cleave to the Covenant and Work of Reformation; Do not decline the Cross of JESUS CHRIST, *choose rather to suffer Affliction with the People of GOD, than to enjoy the Pleasures of Sin for a Season, and account the Reproach of CHRIST greater Riches, than all the Treasures of the World.* Let my Death grieve none of you, it will be more profitable and advantagious both for me, and for you, and for the Church of GOD, and for CHRIST's Interest, and Honour, than my Life could have been. I forgive all Men the Guilt of it, and I desire you to do so also: *Pray for them that persecute you, and bless them that curse you; Bless, I say, and curse not.* I die in the Faith of the Apostles, and Primitive Christians, and Protestant Reformed Churches, particularly of the Church of Scotland, whereof I am a Member and Minister. I do bear my Witness and Testimony to the Doctrine, Worship, Discipline, and Government of the Church of Scotland, by Kirk-Sessions, Presbyteries, Synods

Synods and General Assemblies; Popery, and Prelacy, and all the Trumpery of Service and Ceremonies, that wait upon them, I do abhor. I do bear my Witness unto the National Covenant of *Scotland*, and Solemn League and Covenant betwixt the three Kingdoms of *Scotland*, *England*, and *Ireland*: These Sacred, Solemn, Publick Oaths of *G O D*, I believe can be loosed, nor dispensed with, by no Person, nor Party, or Power, upon Earth; but are still binding upon these Kingdoms, and will be for ever hereafter; and are ratified, and sealed by the Conversion of many Thousand Souls, since our entering thereinto. I bear my Witness to the Protestation against the Contraverted Assemblies, and the Publick Resolutions, to the Testimonies given against the Sectaries, against the Course of Backsliding and Defection that is now on Foot in the Land, and all the Branches and Parts thereof, under whatsoever Name or Notion, or acted by whatsoever Party or Person. And in the last Place, I bear my Witness to the Cross of *J E S U S C H R I S T*, and that I never had Cause, nor have Cause this Day to repent, because of any Thing I have suffered, or can now suffer for his Name: I take *G O D* to Record upon my Soul, I would not exchange this Scaffold with the Palace or Mitre of the greatest Prelate in *Britain*. Blessed be *G O D*, who hath shewed Mercy, to such a Wretch, and hath revealed his Son in me, and made me a Minister of the everlasting Gospel, and that he hath deigned, in the midst of much Contradiction, from Satan and the World, to seal my Ministry upon the Hearts

of

of not a few of his People, and especially in the Station wherein I was last, I mean the Congregation, and Presbytery of *Stirling*; And I hope the LORD will visit that Congregation, and Presbytery once more, with faithful Pastors. GOD forgive the poor empty Man, that did there intrude upon my Labours, and hath made a Prey of many poor Souls, and exposed others to Reproach and Oppression, and a Famine of the Word of the LORD. GOD forgive the Misleaders of that Part of the poor People, who tempted them to reject their own Pastor, and to admit of Intruders; And the Father of Mercies pity that poor misled People, and the LORD visit the Congregation and Presbytery of *Stirling* once more with faithful Pastors, and grant that the Work, and People of GOD, may be revived through all *Britain*, and over all the World. JESUS CHRIST is my Light, and my Life, my Righteousness, my Strength, and my Salvation, and all my Desire: Him, O him, I do with all the Strength of my Soul commend unto you: *Blessed are they that are not offended in him; Blessed are they that trust in him. Bless him, O my Soul, from henceforth, even for ever. Rejoyce, rejoyce, all ye that love him, be patient, and rejoyce in Tribulation: Blessed are you, and blessed shall you be for ever and ever; everlasting Righteousness*

ousness and eternal Salvation is yours; All are
 yours, and ye are CHRIST's, and CHRIST
 is GOD's. Remember me, O LORD, with the
 Favour thou bearest to thy People; O visit me with
 thy Salvation, that I may see the Good of thy
 Chosen, that I may rejoyce in the Gladness of thy
 Nation, that I may Glory with thine Inheritance.
 Now, let thy Servant depart in Peace, since mine
 Eyes have seen thy Salvation.



5 AU 63

SOME

SOME
CONSIDERATIONS
Contributing unto the
DISCOVERY
Of the Dangers that threaten
RELIGION,
And the Work of
REFORMATION
In the
Church of Scotland.

Published for informing the Ignorant and
Inadvertent, for awakning the Careless and Secure,
for stirring up unto the Exercise of Repentance,
and Faith towards GOD, and for perswading unto
a godly Union and edifying Peace, &c.

By *James Guthrie*, Minister of the Gospel at *Stirling*.

*Amos 3. 8. The Lion hath roared, who will not fear?
the Lord God hath spoken, who can but Prophesie?*

*Jonah 1. 6. What meanest thou, O sleeper? arise,
call upon thy God, if so be that God will think upon
us, that we perish not.*

*Rev. 2. 5. I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove
thy Candlestick out of his Place, except thou repent.*

G L A S G O W,

Printed by *William Dunlop*, for *William Gray* Mer-
chant in *Lanerk*. MDCCXXXVIII.



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THE
PREFACE
TO THE
READER.

Christian Reader,



THE true Protestant Religion as reformed in Doctrine, Worship, Discipline, and Government in the Church of Scotland, is a Pearl of so incomparable Value and Price, that the very hearing and apprehension of any Danger, threatening its Spoil and Ruin, cannot but affect every Soul that knoweth the Worth, and is in love with the Beauty thereof, especially the Hearts of all the genuine and true born Sons and Daughters of God, who have received their spiritual Life and Being therein, and do grow up under the Shadow thereof: How much more ought it, and I hope, doth it affect thee, when such Dangers do threaten the same, as we nor our Fathers have not heard nor seen the like, since the Time of Reformation from Popery; these in the Year 1588. from the Spanish Armado without; and from the Plottings and Practises of Papists within, seem in many Respects nothing comparable to these of this Time: And though

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I be far from extenuating the Hazard that Religion stood into under Prelacy, (especially when the Service Book and the Book of Canons were violently obtruded upon this Church) or from reflecting upon the necessary, and just, and laudable Opposition that was made thereunto; Yet I do believe, that upon sober and serious Examination, it shall be found by Men of Judgment and Understanding, (who are pleased to make the Parallel) to involve nothing contrary to the Words of Soberness and Truth, to assert, That the Hazard of Religion is greater now, nor it was then, and that the Tokens and Prognosticks of a dreadful Night of Darknes and Desolation upon the Sanctuary of the Lord in this Land, are more and more pregnant now, than they were at that Time: The General Assembly of this Church thought, that they had Reason thus to speak in the Year 1647. in their brotherly Exhortation to England. “ We cannot (say they) but look upon the Danger of the “ true Reformed Religion in this Island, as greater “ now than before; not only for that, these very “ Principles and Fundamentals of Faith, which under Prelacy, yea, under Popery it self, were generally received as uncontroverted, are now by the Scepticism of many Sectaries of this Time, either opposed or called in question; but also because in “ stead of carrying on Reformation towards Perfection, that which hath been already built, is in Part “ cast down, and in Danger to be wholly overthrown, “ through the Endeavours of Sectaries, to comply with “ many of the Prelatical and Malignant Party, and “ their joining hand in hand, and casting in their lots, “ and interweaving their Interests together in way of “ Combination against the Covenant and Presbyterial Government; yea, the unclean Spirit which was cast “ out, is about to enter in again with seven other Spirits

“ rits worse than himself, and so the Latter-end like
“ to be worse than the beginning.” If there was ground
for such a Warning and Complaint above twelve Years
ago, when the Toleration of Errors and Heresies was
not enacted by a Law, and the Parliament of England,
and the Assembly of Divines at Westminster, were pro-
ceeding in the Work of Reformation, and Uniformity
in Religion, and the State and Church of Scotland
were in their Integrity: How much more now, under
all the Evils that have since come to pass in both Nati-
ons, and which do grow upon us Day by Day, and are
come to such a Height, that without a wonderful and
mighty Hand of gracious Providence, interposing to
preserve Religion, it seems to be nigh to Ruin amongst
us, and that our Land shall be involved in Darknes,
and plunged in the Depths of Atheism, and Error, and
Popery, and Profanity? The thought of these things,
as they did induce me two or three Months ago to pen
these Considerations, tending to the Discovery of the
Dangers that threaten Religion, and the Work of Refor-
mation in this Church; So hath it now perswaded me
to send the same abroad with the former Testimony, that
by casting these few Mites into the publick Treasury of
the Sanctuary, I might according to my weak Mea-
sure, contribute and concur with other more faithful and
able Ministers and Witnesses of Jesus Christ in the
Land, for informing of the Ignorant and Inadvertant,
for rebuking of the Careless and Indifferent, for
awakening such as are secure, for warning of such as
have left their First-love, that they may remember
whence they are fallen, and repent, and do the first works,
and for stirring up of these who have received the Truth
in Love, to be zealous for the Lord of Hosts, and valiant
for his Truth upon the Earth, by standing in the Breach,
and contending diligently for the Faith once delivered to
the Saints, for perswading unto the Exercise of Repen-
tance

tance and Faith towards God, and to Watchfulness and Tenderneſs in Duty, and unto cordial and well grounded Union in the Lord, that we may all of us in Subordination to him, with one Shoulder to the outmoſt of our Power, by all lawful Means in our Stations and Callings, faithfully endeavour the Preſervation of Religion, and the Work of Reformation, that the bleſſed Truths of the Goſpel, and precious Ordinances of Jeſus Chriſt being preſerved amongſt us in their Purity and Integrity, they may be tranſmitted without Spot to our Poſterity. I do not doubt, but diſcerning Eyes may ſee more Dangers than I have ſpoke unto, I have but pointed at a few, and if any ſhall judge this Diſcovery to be defective, I ſhall be glad, and not think my Labour loſt, if they may but thereby be provoked to give a more diſtinct and full Sound in theſe Things. It will haply be the Expectation and Deſire of ſome, that ſomething ſhould be ſpoke alſo for diſcovering of theſe Duties that the Lord calls for at our Hands, for preſerving of Religion in the miſt of ſo many Dangers: Somewhat of Duty there is, which the Diſcovery of the ſeveral Dangers doth by native and clear Conſequence point forth, the whole would be a Work very difficult and comprehensive, and that doth require much Light and Leaſure: Therefore hoping that it may be done to better Purpoſe by theſe of more Prudence and Authority in the Church, I ſhall for the preſent forbear to meddle further therein, and wiſhing that the little which I have done in the firſt Part of the Work concerning the Diſcovery of the Dangers, may be accepted of the Saints, and contribute for thy Edification. I do continue

Thy Servant for Jeſus ſake,
in the Work of the Goſpel,

JAMES GUTHRIE.

Some



Some Considerations contributing unto the
Discovery of the Dangers that threaten
Religion and the Work of Reformation,
in the Church of Scotland.

Consideration First.

*From that swarm of Pestilent Errors and
Heresies that doth abound in the neigh-
bour Nation of England, and our Vici-
nity thereunto, and intimate and day-
ly Correspondence therewith.*



IT is far from my Purpose to cast
any Imputation upon *England*,
or to render the neighbour
Church and Nation vile in the
Eyes of any, by discovering of
their Nakedness, in reckoning
out the many pestilent Errors
and Heresies that many therein
are infected with: I know there be many Thou-
sands in that Land, who have not bowed their Knees
to *Baal*, nor defiled their Garments by departing a-
way from the Faith, but do sadly bemoan and faith-
fully bear Witness against the falling away of others.
And I do easily acknowledge, that *England* hath a
great

great and honourable Company of precious, and sound, and able, and godly Ministers and Professors, as readily are to be found in any Nation or Church upon the Earth; but I hope it shall be no Injury nor Offence to any to say (and would to God I could speak it with that Compassionate Resentment and serious affectedness of Heart, that doth become in so sad and Soul-concerning a Case) that a great many in that Church and Nation, are infected with many noisom Errors and pestilent Heresies, which fret as a Gangren unto the destroying of many poor Souls: Is there almost any of the precious and necessary Truths of God, but hath some Opposers and Contradicters in *England*? Not only are the beautiful Superstructures thrown down, but the very lowest and most necessary Foundations of the Christian Religion razed and plucked up by the Roots, by the Blasphemies of some. To dispute and declaim, and write against the blessed Trinity, against the Divinity of the eternal Son of God, Jesus Christ, who is over all, God blessed for ever, against the sacred Scriptures that they are not the Word of God, are with not a few, things common and ordinary; yea, these very things which *Jews* and *Mahumetans*, and not a few in Pagan Nations do acknowledge; and which being denied, the Condition of a Man is made little better than that of a Beast; such as the Immortality of the Soul, the Resurrection of the Dead, Heaven and Hell, eternal Rewards, and eternal Punishments, are by diverse wantonly debated, and by some pertinaciously denied and oppugned. The Time was, and that not many Years ago, when *Independency*, *Eraastianism*, *Brownism*, and *Anabaptism* in that Land, were looked upon as threatening Danger to the Churches and Work of Reformation in these Nations; yet in Comparison to the Errors, that now abound in *England*, these are but as Mole-hills to

Moun-

Mountains: The whole Body of *Arminianism*, *Antinomianism*, *Pelagianism*, *Socinianism*, *Familism*, *Quakerism*, and almost what not that hath at any Time been broached by the Father of Lies, and infested the Christian Church, but hath some Brockers and Patrons there. That these things are so, is but too sadly true, and these things being so, Is not the Church of *Scotland* by Reason of its Vicinity unto, and intimate and daily Correspondence and Commerce with *England*, in eminent Hazard to be tainted with Infection thereby; the Vicinity and next neighbour-head of Nations and Churches, especially when attended with intimate and ordinary Fellowship, hath always had great Influence upon the Manners of one another, chiefly as to the depraving and corrupting of Religion, to which all the Sons of Men by Reason of their inbred Ignorance, and Instability, and the Power of corrupt Imaginations, are of themselves but too too prone. The Children of *Israel* (not only) when they lived in the Land of *Egypt*, were infected with many idolatrous and heathenish Customs, *Ezek. xxi. 27.* (but even) when separated and brought into *Canaan*, albeit railed in and fenced with the holy and perfect Law of the Lord, to which was added the Sanction of many great and precious Promises to such as did obey, and of many dreadful Threatnings against the Disobedient and Rebellious, which were accordingly verified by God in eminent Acts, of his Justice and Goodness; the Idolatrous Opinions and Practises of their neighbour Nations had such Influence upon them, that they could not be kept (scarce at any Time for one Generation together) from learning their Works, and going a whoring after their corrupt Customs, *Psal. cvi. 35, 36, 37, 38, 39.* Yea, sometimes came to be worse than the Heathen; whom the Lord had de-

destroyed before them, *2Chron.* xxxiii. 9. and to
 change his Judgments into Wickedness, more than
 the Nations, and his Statutes more than the Coun-
 tries, that were round about them, *Ezek.* v. 6. e-
 specially after that Religion came to be corrupted
 amongst the ten Tribes by *Jeroboam*, his erecting the
 Calves at *Dan* and at *Bethel*. *Judah* and *Jerusalem*,
 though they had the Temple and the Ark, and the
 Oracle, and the Altar, with all other the Ordinances
 of God, and also many Prophets arising up early,
 and speaking to them in the Name of the Lord, did
 then become treacherous, *Jer.* iii. 11. *Abolab* saw
 what *Abolibab* had done, she became more corrupt
 in her inordinate Love than she, and in her Whore-
 doms more than her Sister, and her Whoredoms
 -----till the Lord saw that she was defiled, and that
 they took both one way, *Ezek.* xxiii. 11. 13. The
 Histories of the *English* and *Scots* Nations and
 Chuches, do testify, that they have for the most
 Part run one Lot, both as to their reforming and cor-
 rupting of Religion: This Consideration was the prime
 Ground of these Bonds and Confederacies that were
 transacted, first, between *Elizabeth* Queen of *Eng-
 land*, and the Lords of the Congregation in *Scotland*,
 and afterwards between that Queen and King *James*
 the sixth: It was also this especially, that did induce
 these Nations and Churches to engage themselves in
 the solemn League and Covenant, *Anno* 1643. be-
 cause (as it is expressed by the Ministers of *England*
 in their Letter to the General Assembly of the Church
 of *Scotland*, *Anno* 1641.) ‘ they did know and ac-
 ‘ knowlede, that these Churches of *England* and
 ‘ *Scotland*, seem both to be imbarcked in the same
 ‘ Bottom, to sink and swim together, and are so
 ‘ nigh conjoynd by so many strong Ties, not only
 ‘ as fellow-members, under the same Head, Christ,
 ‘ and

‘ and Fellow-subjects, under the same King, but also
 ‘ by such Neighbour-hood and Vicinity of Place,
 ‘ That if any Evil should infest the one, the other
 ‘ cannot be altogether free, or if for the present, it
 ‘ should, yet in process of Time, it would sensibly
 ‘ suffer also, ” which is homologated by the Assen-
 bly in their Answer to that Letter : ‘ We have learn-
 ‘ ed (say they) by long Experience, ever since the
 ‘ Time of Reformation, and especially after the two
 ‘ Kingdoms have been by the great goodness of
 ‘ God to both, united under one Head and Monarch,
 ‘ but most of all, of late, which is not unknown
 ‘ to you, what Danger and Contagion in Matters
 ‘ of Kirk Government, of divine Worship, and of
 ‘ Doctrine, may come from the one Kirk to the
 ‘ other ; which besides all other Reasons, may
 ‘ make us pray to God, and to desire you and all
 ‘ that love the Honour of Christ, and the Peace of
 ‘ these Kirks and Kingdoms, heartily to endeavour,
 ‘ that there might be in both Kirks one Confession
 ‘ of Faith, one Directory for publick Worship, one
 ‘ Catechism, and one Form of Kirk Government, ”
 And the Commissioners of the Parliament of *Eng-
 land* in the Propositions given by them to a Com-
 mittee, to be presented to the General Assembly of
 this Church, *Anno* 1643. for perswading of them
 to further and expedite the Aid and Assistance; then
 demanded by both Houses from the Kingdom of
Scotland, after they have given them to understand,
 that by Reason of the prevailing of Papists, the pre-
 latical Sanction and other malignant Enemies, to
 these who desired Reformation, the hopeful Begin-
 nings thereof, were likely not only to be rendred in-
 effectual, but all the former Evils, Superstitions and
 Corruptions to be introduced by strong Hand. They
 do in the next Place tell them, That if once these
 D should

' should again take Root in the Church and King-
 ' dom of *England*, they would quickly spread their
 ' Venom and Infection into the Church, and
 ' Kingdom of *Scotland*," the Truth of which being
 well known, both to our Church and State, did pre-
 vail upon them to concur with *England* in Counsels
 and Forces, for suppressing and preventing of these
 things, as may be seen in their Answers to the De-
 clarations of the Honourable Houses of the Parlia-
 ment of *England*, concerning that Purpose. . Up-
 on the same Ground, the Church of *Scotland* did fre-
 quently by her Commissioners at *London*, and by her
 Letters to the Parliament of *England*, and to the
 Assembly of Divines at *Westminster*, and by her Ex-
 hortations to her Brethren of *England*, often warn
 of the Danger of Errors and Heresies, when they
 were but yet in their first Buddings, and far from
 the Height that now they are at in *England*. The
 Words of the Assembly in their Declaration and
 brotherly Exhortation to their Brethren of *England*,
Anno 1647. are worth the repeating in this Case:
 (say they) while in the Neighbour Kingdom,
 ' The Staves of Beauty, and Bands, Covenant, and
 ' Brother-hood, are broken by many, the Horn of
 ' Malignants and Sectaries exalted, the best affected
 ' born down, Reformation ebbing, Heresy and
 ' Schism flowing: It can hardly be marvelled at by
 ' any Person of Prudence and Discretion, if we be
 ' full of such Fears, and Apprehensions, as use to be
 ' in these who dwell near to a House set on Fire, or
 ' a Family infected, especially being taught by the
 ' sad Experience of the Prelatical Times; How easi-
 ' ly a Gangren in the one half of this Island may
 ' spread through the whole, knowing also the inve-
 ' terate and insatiable Malice of the Enemies of this
 ' Cause and Covenant, against this Church and
 ' King-

Kingdom, which we cannot be ignorant of, unless we would shut our Eyes, and stop our Ears": I might cite many things to this Purpose out of the publick Records of both Churches and Nations, but these few I hope do sufficiently witness, what were the Thoughts and Apprehensions of Men of Judgment and Understanding in both, but a very few Years ago, as to the Danger of Religion in *Scotland* in the case of *England's* being infected with Errors and Heresies. And if there was Reason then so to Judge, how much more now, when besides the Vicinity and Contiguity of these two, and the dayly Commerce and Correspondency that is between the People thereof, *Scotland*, is incorporated into one Civil Body and Government with *England*, and have also the Bar of Civil Laws for keeping out, and curbing of many Errors and Heresies taken away, and Toleration and Protection allowed thereunto, by which it cometh to pass, that the Danger which was formerly nigh unto us, is now also in our Bowels. And to this I shall speak in the next Place.

Confideration Second.

From the Infection of Errors and Heresies already begun, and the Footing that they have already got in this Church and Nation.

THOUGH the Plague when near unto us is dangerous, and Fire in our Neighbours House, can hardly be kept from taking hold of our own, yet Infection in our own Body, is more dangerous, and much harder it is to keep our

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House

House from burning when the Fire hath already
 sizsed upon it, and the Flames are flashing about our
 Ears ; and this is the Case that the Church of *Scot-*
land, and Religion therein do stand into at this Day:
 Not only have we amongst us many Strangers who
 vent their Errors at will, and without Controul-
 ment, but fundry also of our own Church and Na-
 tion, are come to be infected therewith. The Mi-
 nistry of the Land, though differing in that unhappy
 Question about the Publick Resolutions, yet are by the
 singular Mercy and goodness of God, for any thing
 that doth yet appear, kept sound and unanimous in
 their Judgments against the Errors of the Times;
 and so also is the Body of the People according to
 the Measure of their Knowledge in their several
 Ranks and Degrees; neither have Sectaries so much
 Cause to boast of their Number and Growth in
Scotland, as commonly they do give out, they are
 (blessed be the God of Truth and of Mercy for it)
 as yet but very few; and inconsiderable in Compari-
 son to the Body of this Church, scarce one to a
 thousand ; yet is the Infection such, as ought not
 to be despised or neglected, as threatening no Danger
 to Religion and the Work of Reformation amongst
 us: Besides fundry others who are infected with
 Errors in several Sorts, there being not a few of
 these monstruously Erring-souls, commonly called
Quakers, who strike at the Root of Christian Reli-
 gion, by denying the Scriptures to be the Word of
 God, and setting up, and holding forth their own
 doting Fancies, and foolish Imaginations, under
 the Name of the Light within them, as the infallible
 Dictats of the Spirit, of Truth, and by denying
 the In-being of Sin, and asserting the Perfection
 of the new Creature in the regenerated, even
 to such a Measure of Righteousness and Holi-
 ness,

ness, as is equal with that of our blessed Saviour, Jesus Christ himself, and by denying of the Resurrection of the Body from the Dead, and maintaining many other Errors, which though abominable and vile in themselves, yet are boldly vented and actively spread by these Persons, and which is more lamentable, sad Experience proveth in both Nations, that not a few, and these not of the most Ignorant and seemingly Profane, are apt to receive, and be carried away with these strange Delusions; And therefore would we not be so slothful and secure, as to think that Religion is not in Hazard by the Infection already begun amongst us. The Apostle telleth us, *That a little Leaven leaveneth the whole lump*, 1 Cor. v. 6. And if the Church of *Corinth* was in hazard by one incestuous Person, sinning against the light of Nature, shall we not judge our selves to be in Hazard by some hundreds; the Leaven of whose Errors is not so sowre to the natural Man's Taste. As the Infection of the Plague of Pestilence hath in a little Time derived it self into many, and at last brought forth the Ruin of great and populous Cities and Societies, so hath the gangren of Error often spread it self from one or a few Members of particular visible Churches unto the Body of visible Professors therein, that from the sole of the Foot unto the top of the Head, there has been little or no Soundness, but Wounds, and Bruises, and putrifying Sores. The *Arrian* Heresy, which was one of the most dangerous and dreadful, that ever troubled the Christian Church, had its Beginning from one Presbyter in the Church of *Alexandria* in *Egypt*, and yet did run so fast and so far, that in a few Years, it did over spread a great Part of the Christian World, which made *Jerom* to say, that the World did

did groan and wonder at it self, that it was become *Arrian*. We will ordinarily find, that the greatest and most prevailing Heresies, have had their Rise and Original from very small Beginnings, and that their Authors and Abettors have been at first but very few and inconsiderable. If we will not believe our Ears, and that which our Fathers have told us, yet let us believe our Eyes, and that which Experience hath taught us. How few and inconsiderable were the Sectaries in these Nations some eighteen or twenty Years ago? And how numerous are they at this Day? The *Quakers* (besides many others of several Sorts) do boast themselves to be for Number sundry ten thousands: And yet I do believe, that within these sixteen Years, or little more, scarce were ten single Persons of that Judgment, heard of in any Place of these Nations; and their increasing in so short a Time to so great a Number, may convincingly teach us, what we may and ought to fear, the Growth and Increase of Sectaries in *Scotland*, albeit their Number for the present be not great: And though haply there be not in every Respect, such an aptitude in the People in this Nation to receive Errors, nor such Parts and Abilities for spreading of them as in sundry of the *English*, and that we have also the Advantage of Church-Discipline for curbing of them; yet would we not upon such Apprehensions as these, be secure: Errors have got no small Footing amongst us already, and if the Infection could enter while the Body is more intire and sound, how much more is it like to spread, when sundry of the Members are corrupted. If we shall take a View of the many great Advantages, that the spirit of Error and Delusion hath at this Time, for strengthening and enlarging it self in this Land, a Man that
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hath but half an Eye, may see, that Religion is eminently in Hazard thereby. Therefore I shall now proceed to speak somewhat unto these.

Confideration Third.

From the Toleration and Protection that is pleaded for, and allowed to many gross Errors and Heresies.

THat the Civil Magistrate is appointed of GOD to take Care, not only of these Things that do belong unto Righteousness, and concern the Civil Peace, and natural Life of Man, but also of the Things that concern Religion; and do respect the Glory of GOD, and the Good of Souls: And that in Subordination to these Ends, such outward Impediments and Obstructions as do hinder the same, ought by him to be removed out of the way, and not to be tolerated in a Christian Common-wealth; Is a Truth so clearly set down in the Scriptures, and so fully confirmed in the writings of Divines, and so plainly and solemnly engaged unto in the Solemn League and Covenant, that it were needless for me to insist upon the Proof thereof: Neither is this my Purpose, if any do desire to furnish themselves with Scripture and Reason, in these Things, they will find somewhat for their Help in the former Testimony, and in the Warning and Testimony of the Reverend Presbytery of *Edinburgh*, lately emitted against that sinful and unseasonable Petition of some of our unhappy Country-men to the Parliament of *England*:

That which we have to lament, is, That notwithstanding the clear Light of the Scriptures, and that Reason both Divine and Humane, do strongly plead the contrary, and that these Nations are solemnly engaged by the publick Vows of GOD upon them, without respect of Persons, to endeavour the extirpation of *Popery, Prelacy, Superstition, Heresie, Schisma, Profaneness*; and whatsoever shall be found contrary to sound Doctrine, and to the Power of Godliness: Yet a very vast Toleration is not only pleaded for, and promoted by many, but also framed into a Law; by which, Protection and Encouragement, is allowed unto many gross Errors and Heresies, that do not only deny and destroy many of the beautiful Superstructures, but do also strike at not a few of the Corner-stones, and chief Foundations of Christian Religion, which doth minister singular Advantage to the Spirit of Delusion, for strengthening and spreading of it self, unto the corrupting of the Truth of God, and subverting of Souls. The corrupt Nature of Man, is of it self most fertile of vain Imaginations, and most prone to carnal Liberty, and to transgress the Bounds, and remove the Landmarks, that are set unto it of God; so that even when curbed and hemmed in with the Rail of his Law, and with the outmost Extent of the Care and Diligence, and Faithfulness, and Zeal, both of Spiritual and Civil Rulers, it can hardly be kept from debording into many gross Extravagancies in the things of God, and from turning into its Course, as the Horse rusheth into the Battle: What then can be expected, when not only the Yoke is taken off its Jaws, but that it is also fostered upon the Breasts, and dandled upon the Knees of Protection, and Countenance and Encouragement, and suffered to grow up under the warm Shadow of Civil Authority; but that
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the Fountains of the great Deep shall be opened up, and overflow the Face of the whole Land; when Satan is loosed out of his Prison, shall he not deceive the Nations? and when the Serpent's Bands are taken off, shall he not cast out of his Mouth Water as a Flood after the Woman, that he may cause her to be carried away of the Flood? Let us but a little consider, what hath been the Fruits of such Toleration in these Churches and States where it hath got footing. I shall not go so far back as to the first Ages of the World, in which Men being left to themselves in the things of God, *professing themselves to be wise, they became Fools, and changed the Glory of the incorruptible God, into an Image made like to corruptible Man, and to Birds, and four footed Beasts, and creeping things.* Neither shall I speak of the Condition of Religion, in some Protestant States beyond Sea, in which Toleration is allowed; but I desire it to be considered: 1. How it fared with the Church of *Judah* in these Periods of Time, when Toleration got any footing therein: I shall not now stand to debate, Whether it was at any Time established in *Judah* by a Law; but it is clear enough, that when any of the Kings of *Judah*, whether through Negligence or want of Integrity, or upon carnal and politick Considerations, did not restrain, but tolerate false Prophets, and Idolaters, and corrupters of the Worship of God, and perverters of his Truth, that Idolatry, and the Leprosie of manifold Errors and Corruptions, did quickly spread themselves over the Face of that Church and Nation, that if the LORD had not been graciously pleased to raise up some good Kings, who in the Zeal of God, and Conscience of their Duty, did imploy their Power for destroying of Idolatry and false Worship, and for making the People to serve the Lord God of their Fathers, according

according to the Law, and the Testimony: It had
 fared no better with them, than it did with the
 Church of *Israel*, or of the ten Tribes, who came
 by their sinful neglect of the Things of *GOD*, and
 tolerating and protecting of false Worship, in a few
 Generations, to lose the Substantials of Religion,
 and the very Face of a Church, and of a State too.
 What sad Instances were of these things in the Days
 of *Solomon, Rehoboam, Abijah, Jehoram, Ahaziah,*
Joash, Amaziah, Ahaz, Manasseh, Ammon, Jeho-
iakim, &c. 2. When about the Time of the Incar-
 nation of our blessed *LORD*, and his being on the
 Earth, sundry Sects were tolerated in the Church
 of the *Jews*, did they not come at last to be all
 overgrown with Nettles and Thorns, and to lose the
 Being and Face of a Church? It is worthy of Ob-
 servation, that the Men of that Time, who were
 zealous Patrons of Toleration, were in the just Judg-
 ment of *GOD* given up to themselves, to be zealous
 Opposers of the Gospel, and to crucifie the *LORD*
 of Glory. 3. It would be considered, what hath
 already been the sad and dreadful Effects of this
 Toleration in these Nations; Is not the Glory of
GOD trodden under Foot, the precious Truths of
 the Gospel corrupted and perverted, the Ordinances
 of *JESUS CHRIST* contemned and cried down,
 the Government and Discipline of the Kirk in a
 great Measure overthrown, the Worship of *GOD*
 despised and profaned, the *LORD's* Day misregard-
 ed and casten loose, the Power of Godliness eaten
 out, and the whole Work of Reformation obstruct-
 ed, and in many Things overturned, many Souls
 subverted, *Papery, Libertinism, Superstition, Here-*
sie, Schism, Scepticism, Atheism, Profaneness, and
 many things contrary to sound Doctrine increased?
 And if there be such a growth of so dreadful Evils,
 in

in so few Years, and whilst that Generation is yet living, whom God brought back from the Borders of *Babylon*, (to which we were threatned to be carried captive under the Corruptions and Tyranny of the *Prelates*?) And who have seen the wonderful Works of the Lord in that great Deliverance, and have lifted up our Hands to Heaven, to swear by him that liveth, and reigneth for evermore, that we would endeavour the Extirpation of these Things? What is to be expected, if this Toleration shall continue, and be transmitted to our Posterity, but Darknes, instead of Divination, and that Darknes shall cover the Land, and gross Darknes the People? 4. Let us suppose, that such a Toleration were granted unto Men, in the Things that relate unto the Duties of Righteousness, that are commanded in the second Table of the Law, *to wit*, that they might without Controulment of the Civil Authority, and with Assurance of Protection from the same, walk in these Things, according to the Dictats of their own Spirits, and Imaginations, and Inclinations of their own Hearts; were it possible, that there could be long Peace to him that goes out, or to him that cometh in; or that Goods, or good Name, or Chastity, or Life, could be long preserved; should not the whole Land in a very short Time, be filled with Rapine, and Oppression, and Violence, with Thefts and Robberies, and Slanders, with Fornications, Adulteries, and Incests, with Blood, and Murder, and every sort of Abominations? And is there not in the Heart of Man, as great, if not greater Pravity, in order to the Duties of the first Table, as to these of the second Table? Nature's Light in our corrupt State, being more eclipsed and depraved in the one, than in the other; Can we then expect any better Fruit of this Toleration,

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in order to the Things of God, and that do concern Religion, than it would produce in reference to the Things of Men, and that do concern Righteousness? Upon this Account, it is, That as God hath revealed in his Word, the Rule, both of Religion and Righteousness, according to which he hath commanded us to walk in his Matters, and in the Matters of Men, and not according to the Imaginations of our own Hearts, doing what seemeth good unto us in our own Eyes, either in the one, or in the other; so hath he appointed Civil Governments, and Magistrates amongst the Children of Men, that they might be Keepers of both Tables of his Law, and that by keeping of both, they might preserve both Religion and Righteousness, which do otherwise (without a mighty Hand of more than ordinary Providence) soon go to Ruin, when Rulers are not a Terror to evil Works, that are done against both. 5. As Toleration doth bring forth the sad Fruits already mentioned; so doth the Mother and Daughter, both of them, *provoke the Lord, to give up Men to vile Affections, and to give them over to a reprobate Mind, to do things not convenient*, as appeareth from the last Part of the first Chapter of the Epistle to the Romans; and so bringeth at last the Ruin, both of Religion and Righteousness, and *Destruction from the Presence of the Lord, and from the Glory of his Power*: All which, with many other obvious Considerations, that would be tedious to insist upon, may make it evident to such, as will impartially and without prejudice, weigh the same in the Balance of the Lord's Sanctuary, and of Reason and Experience; that as the Spirit of Error and Delusion hath singular Advantage, so Religion is in eminent Hazard thereby.

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Confideration Fourth.

From the Ignorance, Unfruitfulness, Instability, Looseness, and Profanity, that do abound in the Land at this Time.

Dangers and Diseases, whether natural or moral, or spiritual, are more or less to be feared, according to the Weakness or Strength, the Disposition or Indisposition of the Object about which they are conversant, to resist or to receive the same, as weak, and ill complexioned Bodies are readily obnoxious to Sickness, and do soon receive Infection, and unwise, and unvigilant States are easily deceived, and soon broken, and put into Confusion; So ignorant, or unstable, or carnal, or profane Souls, do easily become a Prey to Temptations, whither in the Matter of their Profession, or of their Conversation; their Ignorance and want of Watchfulness, rendring them blind, as to the discovering of the Snare; and their want of spiritual Life and Strength, rendring them impotent and indisposed, as to the avoiding and resisting of it; and their Instability and Looseness inclining and disposing them to tamper, and dally with it: By which it cometh to pass, that they are easily and often intangled, especially in a Time of abounding Temptations; yea, it is righteous with the Lord, because they do not like to retain him in their Knowledge, to give them up to a Mind void of Judgment; and because they receive not the love of the Truth, to send them strong Delusion, to believe a Lie: Hence it was, that the
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World in older Times, both before and after the Flood, came to be drowned in gross Superstition, and abominable Idolatry, and that a great Part of the Christian Church in latter Ages, came to be drowned in *Mahumetanism* and *Popery*. Now, if we shall look through the Breadth of our Land, may we not find, that there are Multitudes of ignorant Souls, who do scarce know the first and most common Principles of Christian Religion, much less, have they their Senses exercised in the Knowledge of the Truth, and of the holy Scriptures, which are the Ground thereof? And how many do sit down satisfied with a very small Measure of Knowledge, taking many precious and necessary Truths upon meer Tradition from their Ancestors and Teachers, without searching the Scriptures, whither these Things be so, that they may attain in themselves a warrantable and well grounded Perswasion thereof? By which it cometh to pass, that sundry such meeting with Deceivers, come to be soon shaken in their Minds. Be there not also many simple and unstable Souls, who are as Reeds shaken with the Wind, and apt to be driven to and fro with every Wind of Doctrine? And be there not many luke-warm and indifferent, and of a carnally politick Spirit, who care for none of these Things? Be there not many Loose and Profane, all which are apt to cast off the Profession of the Truth, and to be easily seduced and drawn away into Error? Because, though happily, many such do not much regard, either Truth or Error; yet when Error is like to prevail, and come in Reputation, and the owning thereof to be attended with carnal or civil Advantages, they can easily be induced to shape their Garments, and wear their Cloaths, according to the Fashion of the Time: Yea, their *carnal Mind, which is Enmity to God*, is
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also Enmity to his Truth, and doth dispose them to cast off the Yoke thereof, which they are easily perswaded to do, when there is nothing to hinder it, but naked Respect to the Truth it self: Every Man in some Sense naturally is a Heretick, having the Seeds of Error in his Soul, and an Aptitude and Inclination to bring forth these bitter Grapes of Wormwood, and of Gall; and the more that he liveth in Formality, and Hypocrisy, and Looseness, these Seeds do in the common Body of Sin, that is in him, receive the more Increase and Strength, and become the more apt to bring forth their own native Fruit: There is also, no doubt, a great fibness between Errors of Judgment, and Looseness of Conversation, and an easie Passage from the one to the other; a Heretick is easily made vicious and profane, and a vicious and profane Man, is easily made a Heretick; a great Part of the Christian World first turned formal, and carnal, then *Arrian* and *Nestorian*, &c. and in the end *Mahumetan*: Do we not see that Looseness and Profanity in the Conversation of sundry, doth easily usher in *Poper*y in their Profession, but much more swiftly do such Men by swarms, decline from the Truth, and embrace Errors, when to their natural Inclination and corrupt Disposition, temporary Advantages or Disadvantages, the Countenance or Disrespect, the Command or Threatning of Civil Authority, cometh to be superadded? Hence it is, that the bulk of sundry People and Nations, have after their receiving and professing of the Truth, sometimes suddenly shaken it off again, and turned aside into Errors, whereof we have many Instances, both in Sacred and in Church-story. Therefore albeit the Truth, is for the present professed in Purity by the Inhabitants of this Land; yet, there being amongst the Body of
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the People, such a Multitude of ignorant, lukewarm, unstable loose Souls, who have lived and grown up in these Sins for many Years together, under the Light of the Gospel, as they may be easily made a Prey to the Temptations unto Error and Delusion, that do already abound amongst us; so there is just Cause to fear, that if the LORD shall for the further Punishment of our Provocations, give us up into the Hand of a Popish or Heretical Power, who should joyn their Profession by a Law, that many such would soon turn Popish or Heretical: And whither this may not be our Lot to be exercised with such a Trial, I leave it to wise Men to judge.

Consideration Fifth.

From the great Decay of a true publick Spirit, and of Diligence, and Zeal, and Watchfulness in the Things of God, and from the great Increase of a Spirit of Sloth, and Neutrality, and Security amongst us.

THough in the Things of GOD it be eminently true, that *except the Lord build the House, the builder buildeth in vain; except the Lord keep the City, the Watchmen watcheth in vain*; yet doth he call upon, and command his People to be zealous for his House, and to be faithful and watchful in the Things that relate thereunto; the Blessing is his, and the Duty is ours: And as it's a token for good, when his People are cordial and active for his Interests, so it's a prognostick of ruin and decay, when they become neutral and indifferent, and deal with a slack Hand, and wax secure in the midst of Dangers: In speaking

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to this, It is not my Purpose to charge Backsliding upon any Party or Person in the Land, upon the account of publick Differences, I think, that without reflecting upon these, or giving Offence to any that are concerned therein, upon one Hand or another, that taking the Body of this Church complexly, it may be truly said, that there is a great Decay of a true publick Spirit, and of former Integrity, and Diligence, and Zeal, and watchfulness for the things of God amongst us, and that no Party is so unsensible of their own Guilt, or so Tenacious of their own Innocency, that they will deny this: I do not speak as to appearing, nor acting in civil Capacities, the Lord having broke our civil Government to Pieces, and casten by our Governors as broken Vessels, whereof he maketh no Use for the Defence and Preservation of Religion, but what a Decay is upon us, as to many of these things that do beseem us as Christians, especially in such an Hour of Temptation; and when the publick Cause of God, and all the precious Interests of Jesus Christ, and of his Kingdom, are in so eminent Hazard. It is true that every Man hath his Gifts and Station assigned him of God, according to the Measure and Bounds of which, without overreaching, (a thing too common in these evil Days) he is to demean himself: But it is also true, that all of us being Members of the Body of Christ, and having an Interest in the things that concern his Kingdom, we ought to be so far of publick Spirits, as not only cordially to wish well unto, and pray for the Body and common Interests thereof, but also according to the Talents we have received of him, and in our Station, and as we are thereunto called of God, to put forth our selves

cheerfully and actively for the Good of the same, whether by doing or suffering. The publick Cause and Work of God was wont to be precious and dear unto us; and the Trime was when no Pains, nor Expence, nor Hazard was declined, for preserving, or promoting thereof: We were wont to stir up our selves, and to stir up one another, and to wrestle with God in Prayer and Supplication together and a part, for setting up of *Jerusalem* and making her a Praise in the Earth. The Time was, when upon the appearing of any Danger to Religion, though haply but afar off, and far inferiour to many Dangers that are now within our Bowels, seasonable and clear Warning was given thereof, by the Body of the Watch-men in the Land, and many private Christians made it their Work to deal seriously with God in the secret Watches of the Night, for preventing of the same, and many were found of every Rank and Condition throughout the Land, who did readily put forth themselves in their Stations and Callings, to prevent future, and remove present Prejudices to Religion. The Time was, when the things of God were more minded and sought, than our own things, his Matters were wont to have the Preference in all publick Councils and Transactions amongst us, and as publick Motions and Overtures did tend to the promoting or prejudicing of the things of God; so they were wont to be entertained or rejected, in publick Meetings; civil Interests were wont to be carried on in Subordination to these that are spiritual, our own Safety and Security was wont to be minded, in Subordination to the Safety and Security of Religion, and of the Kingdom of Jesus Christ; but now such a publick and tender, and vigilant Spirit is in a great

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great Measure gone from amongst us, and in stead thereof, Neutrality, and Indifferency, and carnal Security possesseth many, as to what concerneth Religion and the Kingdom of Jesus Christ; and to many it seemeth to be but of small Concernment, whether the Lord's Matters sink or swim; many seek their own things, and study to secure themselves; and their own Matters, but few seek the things of Jesus Christ, or care for the preserving or the securing of his Interest: Is it not for a Lamentation that in the publick Meetings which have been kept in the several Shires of this Nation, these eight or nine Years past, There hath been little or no Care, or Resentment of Religion, or of the Work of God, but these things have been in a great Measure forgotten or laid aside, as if we were not a People devoted to the Lord; Or, as if Religion were nothing of our Concernment; Or, as if all that Care did belong to Ministers only: To these it is indeed in a special way incumbent to take Care thereof; and would to God, that all of us who bear that Name, did endeavour to be faithful and vigilant in this Hour of Tentation: There is no doubt, but we, even we also, have our own Faintings and Failings as to many things that are called for, in such a Day, and that our Breaches have both weakned our selves, and blunted and stumbled others: But surely neither all the Fault, nor all the Duty is ours only. As the several Ranks and Estates of the Land were honoured of God to be eminently instrumental, both in the Beginning and Progress of the Work of Reformation, for sundry Years together, so there is no Question, but it is still incumbent to them in Duty, in their several Stations and Callings, according to the Oath of God in the Covenant,

Really, constantly, and sincerely, all the Days of their Life, to endeavour the Preservation of the reformed Religion in the Church of *Scotland*, in Doctrine, Worship, Discipline, and Government and not to give themselves over to Indifferency and Neutrality thereanent, or to give themselves to be possessed with a Spirit of carnal Security, and Negligence, in Reference thereto. I do not doubt, but the Conscience and Care of their Duty, is upon the Hearts of some of all Ranks in the Land: But who can deny, that a Spirit of Security and Neutrality hath prevailed upon many: Flesh and Blood, and carnal Wisdom, will not want Excuses in these Matters; But if we shall enter into the Sanctuary of the Lord, and weigh it in his Balance, it cannot be excused, that the Covenant and Cause of God, that Religion and the Interests of Jesus Christ should be so much forgotten and laid aside, and that there should be so small Resentment of the Injuries that are done thereunto; and that no security, nor Remedy against the Encroachments that are made thereupon, and the Dangers that threaten the same, should be so much as propounded, or desired. How far is this from that which we were once at, and is there not Cause to fear, that because of this Luke-warmness, God shall spue us out of his Mouth, as he threatneth to do unto the Church of *Laudicea*, because she was neither hot nor cold, but Luke-warm in the Matters of God, *Rev. iii. 16.*

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Confideration sixth.

From the Divisions that are amongst us.

WHILST I am speaking of these Dangers that are intestine, and do Minister Advantage to the Spirit of Error and Delusion, I cannot overpass our Divisions, that being a Danger that is none of the smallest: It is the Assertion of our blessed Lord Jesus, which Reason and Experience doth verify, that a Kingdom divided against it self cannot stand; and how sad are these Divisions which are in *Scotland* at this day, I shall not insist on these that do concern Civil Government, which yet (where ever they are) have no small Influence upon things religious; Men being oftentimes apt to follow that way, even in the things of GOD, that seemeth most to contribute for setting up or settling these Civil Governments and Governors, which their Hearts did most affect, and their Endeavours thereanent, together with the reciprocal Endeavours of these Governors; themselves having oftentimes no small Tendency unto the altering or changing somewhat in Religion; but waving those things, Is there not Difference and Division amongst us, even in order to things Religious? To wit, the Discipline and Government of the Church, and the Covenant, and a great Part of the late Work of Reformation, &c. It is true, there hath been external Subjection in these things by the Body of the Inhabitants of this Land, but it were to shut our Eyes, and to befool our selves in the

clear Day, to think, that all these who did externally subject themselves thereunto, before the Year 1650. do now approve thereof; the Practises and Professions of many, witnessing the contrary; some being openly fallen off to *Independency*, some to *Anabaptism*, some to *Quakerism*; and many being fraughted with the old Malignant Enmity against the Covenant, and the Work of Reformation, and the Discipline, and the Government of the Church, speaking evil of, and reproaching these Things at their Pleasure, and making it manifest, that they would be glad of any Means and Opportunity to bear down and overturn the same; and how sad are these Divisions that are amongst us of the Ministry? How are the Watchmen, who ought to see with one Eye, and to speak with one Tongue, and to bear with one Shoulder, divided amongst themselves? It is not my Purpose at present to discover the Fountain of this Evil, or to impute the Guilt thereof to one rather than to another: Neither do I mean from the bad Consequents of our Divisions, to debate Innocency and Truth into Silence, or to perswade to an Union upon any Terms, though with the Increase of our Sin against God, and with the greater Prejudice of his Work, and with more Offence to the Consciences of these that are truly tender and godly, but simply to hold forth, that the Division doth in many Respects, threaten Danger to Religion, and the Ordinances of Jesus Christ amongst us, that so the true Causes and right Cure thereof may be searched into, and studied.

I. It giveth Advantage to Adversaries to cast Slanders and Imputations upon our Church, and the Government thereof, as having (if they may be believed) little or nothing of that Unity and Peace, and Love, that becometh the true Church,

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and Pastors of Jesus Christ. 2. It doth lay a stumbling Block in the Way, not only of ignorant and carnal, and profane Men, to make them cast at Religion and Reformation, but also of some less knowing, and weak amongst the Godly, who are brought to doubt, which Way to follow, whilst they see some Learned and Godly Ministers pleading for one Thing, and others also Learned and Godly pleading for another. 3. It doth much harden and confirm such of that Party in the Land, who formerly opposed the Work of Reformation, and do retain their Enmity thereto, that it is not a Work that hath been of God, as having no consistence, nor concord with it self, but like to pull down and destroy it self by the Divisions that are amongst the chief Instruments thereof. 4. It doth divert the Judicatories of the Kirk, and the Members thereof, from imploying themselves against the common Adversaries, and promoting the Exercises and Power of Godliness. 5. It maketh Discipline and Church-Censures sundry Times to be misregarded, as not proceeding from Presbyteries and Synods jointly, but oftentimes in a divided way. 6. It breedeth sundry Inconveniencies in the planting of Churches, sometimes obstructing the Plantation for sundry Years together, sometimes planting them with Men not satisfiably qualified, sometimes making two differing Plantations in one Congregation, by which, both the Ministers and the People come to be divided, or the dissatisfied Party, if they cannot win at a Minister, to be casten loose, and left without a Ministry, and the Benefit of the publick Ordinances. 7. The Door is thereby shut sundry Times, against sundry able and Godly Expectants, who are thereby kept from entering into the Ministry. 8. Advantage is thereby given to disaffected

disaffected People in some Congregations, to separate and withdraw from their own lawful Pastors, and either to cast themselves loose of the Ordinances, or else to call and set up others in an inordinably way. 9. It doth retard and obstruct the purging of the Church from insufficient and scandalous Ministers and Elders, which do shelter themselves, and are taken but too little notice of, under these Differences and Divisions. 10. It doth occasion Men in the Heat of their Debates, anent these Differences, to run too far upon the asserting and venting of Things for the Defence of their own Opinions and Judgments, that may prove Seeds and Inlets to Tenets and Evils that are of greater and more dangerous Consequence. 11. It doth in no small Measure alienate the Minds, and estrange the Hearts and Affections of good Men one from another, and weaken them in their Prayers before G O D one for another, and in that Confidence and Cordialness that they should have in their joynt carrying on of common and uncontroverted Duties; all which, as they are present Prejudices to Religion and the Work of G O D; so being continued, are like to prove more and more dangerous and destructive thereunto.

Consideration Seventh.

From the Attempts and Assaults that are made by many upon the Ordinances of Jesus Christ.

AS this inferior World without the Light of the Sun, would be but a Mass of Darknes and Confusion, so would the Church Militant

tant without Ordinances; and as Food is necessary
 for preserving of the Life of the Body, so hath
 G O D appointed, that in our Pilgrim Condition
 here below, the Soul's Life should depend upon the
 Use of his Ordinances: What is Religion but a
 consciencious worshipping of G O D, after the Man-
 ner, and in the Use of the Ordinances prescribed
 by himself? And yet I do not know, if in any Ge-
 neration the Ordinances of G O D have been more
 directly struck at, than they are by many in these
 Nations at this Day: I shall pass that fanatick Ge-
 neration of *Familists*, that cry down all Worship
 and Ordinances, as Things below a Saints Condition,
 fundry of which as wandering Stars be travelling
 up and down these Lands: But let us a little con-
 sider what Attempts and Assaults are made by many
 against the Word of G O D, and the preaching thereof,
 against the Sacraments, against the LORD's Day,
 against the Ministry, and against the Discipline
 and Government of the Church; which Things are
 the very Pillars of Religion, that being destroyed,
 Religion cannot but evanish and turn into nothing.
 As to the holy Word of G O D contained in the
 Scriptures of Truth: There be not only sundry *Je-*
suites and *Seminary-Priests* lurking in sundry Places
 of the Land, who cry down the Perfection and Au-
 thority of the Scriptures, and the reading thereof
 in our vulgar Tongue, and the Bibles which are in
 Peoples Hands, as false, and corrupt, and heretical
 Translations, and do commend unto them the Au-
 thority of the Church of *Rome*, and her Traditions,
 for the Ground of Salvation, and the old Latin
 Version for the authentick Text of the Scripture,
 and the Bible of *Doway* for the best and purest *Eng-*
lish Version, and all our publick Worship as cor-
 rupt; but we have also the whole Tribe of the
Quakers concurring and conspiring to the outmost
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of their Power, to cry down the Divinity and Authority of the written Word of God, and to persuade such as will believe them, that the Scriptures have no Authority over Mens Consciences, and that no Command in Scripture that was given to others, doth bind us, save what we have an Impulse upon our own Spirits for, and that every Man in the World hath a Light within him, sufficient to guide him unto Salvation, without the help of any outward Light or Discovery, and that the Dictats of this inward Light, are the infallible Dictats of the Spirit of God, which every one is bound to hearken unto. This, as it is one of the most impudent, so it is one of the most compendious ways that ever was taken by Satan, for striking at the Root of Christian Religion, and banishing of it out of the World. If the Scriptures be not the Word of God, what have we for the Ground of our Faith, and Rule of our Duty? The Light that is within us, when not derived from, and founded upon, and agreeable unto the Law and the Testimony, is but Darknefs, and leadeth us, unto as many By-paths of Division and Destruction, as our corrupt Fancy can devise, or the Father of Lies suggest unto us: Neither are these Men any greater Friends to the Sacraments instituted and appointed by Jesus Christ under the Gospel, they cry down Baptism with Water, and the Lord's Supper, as being but Types and Shadows ceasing upon the Appearance of Christ within them. The *Anabaptists* also, tho' they do not simply deny nor oppugn the Ordinance of Baptism, yet by denying and oppugning the Baptism of Infants, born within the visible Church, they do not only at one Dash Unbaptize and Un-church all the Thousands of our *Israel*, but do also leave our Children and Posterity, in regard of any Covenant-Privilege, or Seal,

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in little or no better Condition, than these of Infidels or Pagans; and how prevailing an Opinion and Party this is in these Nations at this Day, is manifest enough. The Lord's Day, tho' a Moral and Divine Institution, and generally acknowledged in the Churches of Christ, to be the Key of Religion, and that Ordinance which keepeth all the rest in Life and Being, by separating us one Day of every Week from the World and worldly Business, to be solemnly set apart and exercised in religious Duties, chiefly these that concern the publick Worship of God, in the publick Assemblies of his People; yet is by many of the Sectaries of this Time, also cried down, and the keeping thereof, slighted and opposed, which being added to that natural Aversness and Enmity that is in the Hearts of all carnal and profane Men, (the Number of which in all Quarters of our Land is not small) unto the giving or keeping a Day unto the Lord, threatens no small Danger unto this most necessary and divine Institution, and to the whole publick Worship of God. What is more like to take with Worldly-minded Men, and wanton Persons, and carnal Libertines, than this, That all Days are alike, and that the Lord's Day is but a Device of Man, and a Yoke, and a Bondage upon the Necks of the Disciples, from which they ought to deliver themselves? This being one of the Things which carnal Hearts do most desire and hunt after: When carnal Liberty getteth Conscience upon its Side, and carnal and licentious Practices get under the Shadow of religious Opinions, they do then wax bold as Lions, and tear in Pieces the precious Truths and Commandments of God, that stand in their way; and thus it is like to prove in the Matter of the Lord's Day. And not only are Ministers had in Derision, and Contempt, and railed upon, and reviled as Deceivers, Thieves, Robbers, *Baal's* Priests, Conjurers, Antichrists, Witches,

Witches, Devils, *Symon's* Serpents, bloody Herodians, Scarlet-coloured Beasts, *Babylon's* Merchants, Wolves, Dogs, Swine, *Sodomites*, Murders; Ministers of Darkness, cursed Speakers, *Cain's* Stock, Vagabonds, who walk in the way of *Cain*, *Balaam* and *Core*, and what not, that a malicious Heart can invent, and a violent Tongue utter; but the Ordinance of the Ministry it self is also cried down, as altogether needless, and burdensome to the Lord's People under the Gospel, who (if some of these Men may be believed) have no need of any outward teaching, by reading or hearing the Scriptures, opened or applied, that Light within them being sufficient to teach them in the Knowledge of the Will of God; As to all these Things that concern their Duty and Salvation, or as others of these Men will have it, all of them are warranted to be Teachers themselves, and that a peculiar Office of a Teaching or Preaching Ministry, is no Ordinance of Christ; Or, if any such be, that they are not to be by any mediate Call from Man, but by an immediate Call from God, and the peculiar Instinct of the holy Ghost. I may add to these Things, the general Disrespect and Disesteem that prevaleth on the Hearts, and appeareth in the Carriage of disaffected and profane Men, to the Ministry; together with a strong Inclination that is in many, to have Ministers according to their own Hearts, who will speak smooth Things unto them, and heal their Hurt slightly, and that the Maintenance of Entrance to the Ministry, to which there was wont to be free and legal Access by vertue of their Ordination, is now seized upon by the Civil Power, who do not allow it to any, but upon Condition of their declaring their Resolution to live peaceably under the present Government: And for the Discipline and Government of the Church, not only are the
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Civil Laws that concern the upholding thereof, and giving Obedience thereunto repealed, and Liberty allowed to all these who are pleased to speak or write against it, or withdraw their Subjection therefrom; but other Sorts also of Kirk Discipline and Government that are destructive thereunto, are set up and promoted, and protected, and countenanced amongst us. These Things being so, is it not past all Question, that the Pillars of Religion, which is Wisdom's House, are in Hazard to be overthrown by the malicious and subtile Devices of Satan? And that it is high Time for us to awake, and see our Danger, lest, e'er we be aware, we be spoiled of the precious Treasure of the Gospel, and blessed Ordinances of Jesus Christ, by which we live, and in which is the Life of our Souls.

Danger Eight.

From the Growth and Increase of Popery in the Land.

THat the Pope and his Party hath these many Years past, had a special Eye upon *Britain*, and upon this Nation as a Part thereof, for reducing the same into the Obedience of the See of *Rome*, is better known than that I need to insist upon the Proof of it; and therefore hath he always had his Emislaries the *Jesuites*, and *Seminary-Priests*, travelling up and down in this Island, under diverse Masks, for perverting of Souls, and setting Plots and Conspiracies on Foot, for compassing that Design. How much their Hopes were heightned, and in what a fair way they were for bringing it about, before the Year 1638. is fresh in Remembrance; And altho' these Hopes were in a great Measure blast-
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ed by the Reformation, then begun in *Scotland*, and prosperously carried on in both Nations for sundry Years thereafter; yet are they now again revived under our present Distempers and Confusions, which (especially by Reason of the vast Toleration of Errors and Heresies, of which I have already spoke) do minister unto Papists great and singular Advantages, for promoting and compassing their Design. Not only is Liberty afforded them to vent most part of the Popish Doctrine, -(which keeping of the Pope's Supremacy, and the Popish Hierarchy, with some other Things of that kind, they may do without Hazard) but these penal Statutes and Laws, which concern Mens coming to Church, and attending the Word and Sacraments, &c. being taken away, they have Liberty to withdraw themselves from the Ordinances and Means of Conviction, and Instruction, and may keep their own private Meetings with their ghostly Fathers, at Home, without Regard to the Censures of the Church; and in the mean while *Jesuites* and *Seminary-Priests*, come not a few of them into the Country, and do import, or cause to be imported, Numbers of Popish Pamphlets, which are industriously spread, and put into the Hands of such as they perceive in any Measure inclinable to their Way, or by Reason of their malignant Disposition, to be in dislike with the Covenant, or the Government and Discipline of the Church, or any Part of the Work of Reformation, or to be Ignorant or Loose in their Conversation: Neither are sundry of them wanting in the mean while; to the outmost of their Power, by subtle and fair Speeches, to draw away such from the Purity of their Profession, and to instill into them, the love of the way of the Church of *Rome*, as that which was the Religion of our Fore-fathers. Not a few Papists also, who had formerly left the Country,

Country, because of the strickness of the Laws, do now return Home again, and others who staid at Home, and did profess Subjection and Conformity to the Church, do now withdraw and openly avow themselves to be Papists: Neither is their Advantage small by the Remnant of the Malignant and prelatial Party, that is yet amongst us: These also having a great Enmity against the Covenant and Government of the Church, and the Work of Reformation: And there being in fundry things a great Simpathy between these Parties, and a great fibness in their Principles and ways, and a deal of readines to correspond together, and to countenance one another: By these Means, and such as these, it comes to pass, that Popery grows and spreads in several Places of the Land from Year to Year, to which if we shall add, the Correspondence that Papists have with, and the Encouragements they have from their Friends Abroad, together with the Design (which hath been long a hatching) of the Popish Leaguers beyond Sea, their invading of *Britain* as the strongest Bulwark of the Protestant Cause, that it being brought under, they may the more easily make a Prey of the rest of the Protestant States and Churches, and that this Invasion is like to be stated upon such a Quarrel, and carried on under such a Pretext as will engage the Affection and Assistance of some, and blunt the Opposition of others: Do not all these things, put together, much heighten the Danger of the true Protestant Religion in *Scotland*.

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Danger Ninth.

*From our Guiltiness in many of these things for which
the Lord threatneth to depart, and remove his
Candlestick.*

I Have spoke to fundry Sins that do abound amongst us, as they do weaken the Soul, in resisting of Temptations, and in following of these Duties that are necessary, for preserving of Religion in its Purity and Power, and as Inlets to dispose unto things, that are contrary and destructive thereunto. I shall now resume some of these Sins, and add thereunto some others, whereof we are in a great Measure guilty, for which the LORD threatneth to depart, and to remove his Candlestick. The first I name, is, That gross Ignorance of the Gospel, and of the necessary Truths of God that possesseth Multitudes of our Land in this clear Gospel-day, and under the Plenty of the Means of Knowledge, Is not this the Condemnation of many, That Light is come amongst us, and that they love Darkneſs rather than Light, the Ignorance of many is affected and perverse, and therefore without Excuse: Is there not Cause to fear that dreadful Word, *It is a People of no Understanding, Therefore he that made them, will have no Mercy on them, and he that formed them, will shew them no Favour, Isa. xxvii. 11.* And that of another of the Prophets, *Be thou instructed, O Jerusalem, lest my Soul depart from thee, Jer. vi. 8.* The second, is, The abounding and prevailing Formality that is amongst us, or a Form of Godliness without the Power thereof, because of this, the LORD threatens

to send Delusion, strong Delusion upon a People that they may believe a Lie, 2 *Thes.* ii. 10, 11, 12. yea, to chuse their Delusions, and bring their Fears upon them, *Isa.* lxvi. 3, 4. And do not such Delusions seem to be the proper Plague of these Nations at this time, chosen and sent of G O D for punishing our Formality: Hath there been at any time more strong Delusion, whether we look unto the Multiplicity and monstrosity of the Errors that are hatched and vented, or multitude of the Persons that have come quickly to be infected therewith: This is doubtless a piece of the Hour and Power of Darkness, wherein Satan is loosed out of his Prison, and is gone forth to deceive these Nations, and when Delusions are chosen and sent of God, and the holy One doth in his spotless and righteous Providence, for punishing the Sins of Men, say to the lying Spirit, who offers himself to be the Minister of enticing of Souls, go forth, and thou shalt prevail, have not all of us Reason to tremble and fear, *Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed, lest he fall,* 1 *Cor.* x. 12. The third, is, Barrenness and Unfruitfulness under the Gospel, for which the L O R D threatens to take away the Hedge of his Vineyard, and it shall be eaten up, to break down the Wall thereof and it shall be trodden down, to lay it waste, and it shall not be pruned nor digged, *Isa.* v. 6, 7, A Charge is given by the Master of the Vineyard, to cut down the Fig-tree that yielded no Fruit for three Years, *Luke* xiii. 7. And the Apostle telleth us, *That the Earth that drinketh in the Rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth nothing but Thorns and Thistles, is rejected and near unto cursing,* *Heb.* vi. 8. And is not this in an eminent Measure the Sin of our Land? That notwithstanding, the Lord doth plentifully water us with the Dew of Heaven, and with the sweet Rain of the Gos-

pel, Day by Day, yet are we as to most of us, an empty Vine, that bringeth forth Fruit unto our selves, but not unto God. The fourth, is, Slighting and loathing, and wearying of the precious things of God, and the blessed Opportunities thereof, and preferring our own carnal and worldly Advantages thereunto, for which the Lord threatens that he will cause the Sun go down at Noon-day, and that he will darken the Earth in the clear-day, and that he will send a Famine of hearing the Words of the LORD, and that his People shall wander from Sea to Sea, and from the North even to the East, they shall run to and fro to seek the Word of the LORD, and shall not find it, *Amos viii. 4, 5, 6, 9, 11, 12.* And this Sin also reigneth amongst us: How many loath the Ordinances, and slight the Opportunities thereof? How many weary of the LORD's Day, and half it between GOD and the World? How is our blessed LORD JESUS and the inestimable Treasure of the Gospel valued by many at a very low Rate? many Time less than thirty pieces of Silver; that he may justly take up that sad Complaint, *A goodly price that I was prized at of them, Zech. xi. 13.* and break his Statutes and be gone. The fifth, is, refusing to hearken unto GOD, for which my GOD saith the Prophet *Hosea, chap. ix. 17. will cast them away:* Are we not a rebellious and gain-saying People, who neither fear the Threatnings of GOD to repent, nor entertain his Promises to believe, nor regard his Commandments, to obey? And may not the LORD upbraid us as he did these Cities, wherein most of his mighty Works were done, because they repented not, and bring upon us the Judgments and Desolation threatned in that Place? *Matth. xi. 21, 22, 23, 24.* May he not because of our Unbelief, cut us off, as he did the Church of the Jews, *Rom. xi. 20.* doth not their Example call upon us, not to be high mind-

minded, but to fear? May he not because of our
 Disobedience, and that so many of us do refuse to
 suffer him to reign over us, pass upon us that sad
 Sentence that is recorded, *Luke* xix. 27. The sixth,
 is, That which is written as the Sin of the Prophets,
Jer. vi. 14. *Ezek.* xiii. 10. 16, 22. *Ezek.* xxxiv. 18,
 19, 21. *Micah.* iii. v. for which the LORD threatens
 that Night shall be unto them, and that they shall
 not have a Vision, that it shall be dark unto them
 that they shall not divine, and that the Sun shall go
 down over them. I do not intend the Application
 of this, to any upon the account of the publick Dif-
 ferences, but without Respect to Parties, or Diffe-
 rences, it can hardly be denied, that though, blessed
 be G o d for it, there be in the Land many precious
 Ministers of both Judgments, who study to divide
 the Word of G o d aright, warning the Wicked to
 turn from the Evil of his way, and encouraging the
 Godly in the Pursuit and Practice of Godliness, and
 speaking a word in Season to weary Souls; yet there
 be not a few who heal the Hurt of the Daughter of
 the LORD's People slightly, and do speak Peace to
 these to whom the LORD doth not speak Peace, who
 thrust with the Side and the Shoulder, and bite
 with the Teeth these who ought to be encouraged
 and comforted. It is sadly bemoaned by the Seri-
 ous seekers of G o d, in many Places of the Land,
 that the Work of some Ministers is not to commend
 themselves to every Man's Conscience, as in the Sight
 of G o d, but to handle the Word of G o d deceit-
 fully, in making sad the Hearts of the Righteous, by
 turning the Edge and Application of their Doctrine
 against them, under the Notion of Hypocrites and
 Sectaries, and such like, and in strengthening the
 Hands of the Wicked, that he should not return from
 his wicked way, by promising him Life, by which it
 cometh to pass, that sundry of the People in sun-

dry Congregations, do bless themselves in their Hearts, and say, that they shall have Peace, though they walk in the Imagination of their Heart, to add Drunkenness to Thirst, and that the few seekers of GOD that are in these Congregations, or in the Country about, are looked upon by such, as the vilest and most hateful of Men, and their way more scarred at, than that of the Drunkard, or the common Swearer; because of this, there is Cause to fear that the LORD shall accomplish the Threatning of the Prophet, by sending Darknes in stead of Divination. The seventh, is, Dealing treacherously with GOD in the Matter of his Covenant, for which the LORD threatneth dreadful Desolation, *Deut. xxix. 22, 23, 24, 25.* And in many Scriptures besides, which Threatnings, he hath eminently verified against the Church of the *Jews*, who because of Breach of Covenant, were cast out of his Sight many hundred Years ago, and have continued in that doleful and desolate Condition unto this Day: And are not we, even we also, these who have been unstedfast, and have dealt falsely in the Covenant of GOD? I shall not descend into Particulars, about which there may be Difference: But sure I am, that cleaving unto GOD, and closly walking with him and Zeal for the Kingdom of JESUS CHRIST, and against the open Enemies, and Adversaries thereof, and the reforming of our selves, and of our Followers, in our several Stations and Capacities, will be denied by none, to be amongst the great Ends, whether of our Baptismal Covenant, or of our National Covenant, or of the Solemn League and Covenant; and that every tender Heart amongst us, will also acknowledge, that most of us have not only come exceedingly short, but most palpably and grossly transgressed in order to all these things, in so far, that the very Obligation thereunto,

unto, is not only forgotten, but trode under-foot of many : A Sin that is much heightned by the greatness of the LORD's Mercies, and wondreful Works manifested and done in our Behalf, in the contriving and carrying on of these Covenants, and by the Openness and Solemnity of our way, in engaging of our selves thereunto : We may say, that because of the Oath of the Covenant, the Land mourneth, and that G O D hath a great and sore Controversy with us for this thing, and that there is just Cause to fear, that as he hath begun, so he will continue to pursue the Quarrel thereof, until he bring Darkness and Desolation upon us, unless Mercy shall prevent us, by giving us to repent and turn again to himself. The eight, is, Forfaking of our first Love, for which the LORD threatneth to remove the Candlestick of the Church of *Ephesus*, *Revel. ii. 4.* which may also breed us great Fear, that our Candlestick shall be removed : And that upon these two Grounds, first, because we have in a very great Measure left our first Love, and declined from our former Attainments. I shall not compare this Generation of our Church with the Generation of our Fathers, I mean, these who did shake off the Yoke of the *Roman* Antichrist, and imbrace the Light of the Gospel, from whose Zeal we are far degenerated ; but let us compare our selves with our selves, I mean, what we are now, with what we once were, and that but a very few Years ago, and see if there be not Cause to say, that we have left our first Love. I shall name but a few Particulars, First, There was in our Love not long ago, a tender Respect to all the precious Truths of G O D, with a fervent Desire and serious Endeavour of attaining and possessing them in their Purity, which brought forth a deal of holy Abhorrency, and Indignation against

every thing that tended unto the leavening or corrupting of the same: What if the Toleration that is now amongst us, had been but moved in *Scotland*, some ten Years ago? Would it have been bruik'd with so many close Mouths, and with so many dry Eyes, as it is this Day. Secondly, There was in our Love a wonderful Zeal for the Priviledges of the Church, and of Christ's visible Kingdom amongst us, that these might not be encroached upon, nor born down by the Powers of the World; but now we can hear and see sad Encroachments made upon these, and say little or nothing, against it, either before G o d or Men. Thirdly, There was in our Love a great deal of Zeal against that bitter Root of Malignancy, I mean, that which is so diametrally opposite to Godliness, and to the Kingdom of JESUS CHRIST; but now it getteth leave to grow up kindly under our Shadow, and many are so favourable to it, that they will scarce once name it, or suffer it to be named. Fourthly, There was in our Love a holy Severity in the Exercise of Church-discipline, for purging of the House of G o d, especially against corrupt and scandalous Church-officers; but that is now in a great Measure slack'd and gone. Fifthly, There was in our Love much Christian and Cordial Respect, one to another, which brought forth sweet Union, and Concord, and Harmony in the Judicatories of the Kirk, and amongst the Ministers of the House of G o d, but now we bite and devour one another. I might also name the abating of our Love to the Ordinances, and to holy Duties; and to Christian-fellowship and 'Tenderness of conversation. But passing these, I come to the other Ground of Fear, and that is, That we seem to be much more fallen from our first Love at this Day, than the Church of *Ephesus* was fallen from hers, when

when God threatned to remove her Candlestick: Let us look upon the Text, and see what *Ephesus* then was, *I know thy Works, and thy Labour, and thy Patience,* (saith Jesus Christ unto her) *and how thou canst not bear them which are evil; and thou hast tried them which say they are Apostles, and are not, and hast found them Liars: And hast born, and hast Patience, and for my Names sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted.*

Do we deserve so great a Testimony as this? Or, are we not far short in all these Things? Where are our Works, and where is our Labour, and Patience, and where is our Zeal against these that are Evil? Are we not a barren and fruitless People? Is not our way the way of the Sluggard, and full of Murmuring, and Fretting? Do we not bear with many who are Evil? and do we not suffer many to go without Trial, who say they are Pastors, and are not? Do we not decline the Cross of Jesus Christ, and refuse to bear, and labour for his Name? And do we not either faint, or turn aside to crooked Ways? And shall we in all these Things fall so far short of *Ephesus*, and of her Carriage, even when the removal of her Candlestick was threatned, and yet not fear the removal of our Candlestick? If we deal impartially with our selves, by considering all these our Provocations, which I have already named, and many more that are but too obvious, and would be tedious to insist upon, we cannot but be affrighted that the Lord shall depart from amongst us; yea, he hath in no small Measure departed already, and this is that to which I shall speak somewhat in the next Place.

D A N G E R Tenth.

That the Lord who is our Light, and Life, and Strength, is in no small Measure departed from us, and hath smitten us with many Plagues of Heart.

TH E Presence and Appearances of God amongst a People, are either such as do concern them simply, as Men united together in Civil Society under Civil Government, in order to Righteousness and Peace, or such as concern them, as Christian Men united in a Church-state, under Ecclesiastick and Spiritual Government, in order to Truth and Holiness. Of the first Sort, are these, which are manifested in the common Operations and Effects of the Spirit, when he giveth unto them the Gifts of Knowledge, Wisdom, Fortitude, Temperance, Justice, Courage, and such like, in reference to Civil Administrations, and blesteth, and prospereth them in the Exercise thereof; So the Lord was with *Cyrus*, whose right Hand he did hold to subdue Nations before him, and to loose the Loins of Kings, and to open before him the Two leaved Gates, &c. *Isa. xlv. 1, &c.* Of the other Sort, are either these, which are manifested in the more peculiar Operations and Effects of his Spirit, (which yet are but common in Opposition to saving Grace) when he giveth unto his People the Gift of Prophecie, or Ministry, or Teaching, or Exhortation, or Church ruling, and countenanceth them in the Exercise thereof, *for perfecting of the Saints, and edifying of the Body of Christ, Rom. xii. 6, 7. Eph. iv. 8, 11, 12.* Or else these, which are manifested in the special Operations of his renewing Spirit, when he giveth sanctifying and saving Grace, and by his continued Breathings, and quickning Influences thereupon, maketh his People to be more and more renewed in the inward Man Day by Day; so he was with his Servant *Paul*, in the midst of all his Tribulations and Afflictions, *2 Cor. iv. 16.* And according to the Measure of the Appearances or Withdrawings of God in these Things; so do the Matters of his People, whether Civil

Civil or Ecclesiastick, or Spiritual, prosper or decay. Now in reference to all these, G O D is in no small Measure departed from amongst us, and hath left us under a Cloud of Desertion, and smitten us with sundry Plagues of Heart. As to Civil Administrations, Wisdom, and Understanding, and Courage, and Strength, and Success, was taken from us, and the Lord did smite us with Blindness, and Confusion, and Astonishment, and Trembling of Heart; Wisdom was not to be found with the Antient, nor Understanding and Counsel with the Prudent, he mingled a perverse Spirit in the midst of us, that caused us to err in every Work; he went not forth with our Armies, and therefore our Princes became like Harts that find no Pasture, and that fly without Strength before the Pursuer; and the Men of might did not find their Hands, but became like unto Women that were affrighted, and did fear, because of the shaking of the Hand of the Lord of Hosts, which he shook over our Land: He made all our strong Holds to be like Fig-trees, with the first ripe Figs which fall into the Mouth of the Eater, when they are shaken, and the Gates of our Land to be set wide open to our Enemies; and his Hand was against us, until he had taken away from us the mighty Man, and the Man of War, the Judge, and the Prudent, and the whole Stay of Armies, and the Staff of our Civil Government: Neither is his Wrath in these Things turned away, but his Hand is stretched out still. Our Nobles are not of our selves, nor do our Governors proceed from the midst of us, but Strangers do bear Rule over us, and the Home-born Sons are broken as the breaking of a Potter's Vessel that is broken to Pieces; so that there is not found in the bursting of it, a Sheard to take Fire from the Hearth, or to take Water out of the Pit:

Neither

Neither is the Lord's Departure small in reference to our Church, and Church-Administrations. He hath sorely cracked, if not broken to Pieces, both the Staffs, *the Staff of Beauty, and the Staff of Bands*, the Unity and Authority of Pastors, and of Church-Judicatories: He hath divided us in his Anger, and poured Contempt upon us; and tho' we have essayed to heal our Wound, and to recover our Strength, yet have all our Essays hitherto, for the most part, been frustrated of the LORD: Do we not come together many Times for the worse, and not for the better? Is there not bruising instead of binding up, and much bitter Contention and Strife in many of our Meetings? Instead of the sweet Fruits of an edifying Union and Peace, whilst we should draw in the Work of the Lord with one Shoulder, do not some draw one way, and others another, rending our Endeavours almost useless to the Church, comfortless to our selves, and despicable to others? Hath not GOD in his holy and just Indignation, mingled somewhat of a perverse Spirit in the midst of us, and are we not full of the Fury of the Lord, and of the Rebuke of our God? We wait for Light, but behold Obscurity, for Brightness, but we walk in Darknes, we grope for the Wall like the blind, and we grope as if we had no Eyes, we stumble at Noon-day as in the Night, we are in desolate Places as dead Men, we look for Judgment, but there is none, for Salvation, but it is far off from us. And is not the LORD's Hand also upon his Ordinances, to restrain and withhold the Blessing thereof? In this Respect, much is sown, and little brought in: The Word of Salvation, as to any sensible Evidence thereof, is but rarely blessed in the Hand of the Ministers, unto the converting of Souls, and turning Men from Darknes unto Light,
and

and from the Power of Satan unto God. It is the Complaint of Faithful Ministers in many Places of the Land, *That they Labour in vain, and spend their Strength for nothing*; yea, how doleful and dreadful is the withering and decay that is upon many Souls, who lay Claim to Conversion, and to a real Interest in JESUS CHRIST? The Generation of the Righteous in the Land do bemoan this Thing, and complain Day by Day, *That Light is darkned, that Life is withered, that Strength is abated, that Presence is evanished, that Tenderness is gone, that Influences are withholden, that Prayer is restrained and shut out, that Faith faileth, that Love is grown cold, that Hearts are hardened as Stones, that there is little or no Delight in God, or in his Word, or in the Fellowship of his People, that Corruptions are aloft, and Heart Plagues do abound, that God hideth his Face, and is as a Stranger unto his People, and leaveth them to wrestle alone in their Duties and Difficulties*; So that to deny the withdrawings of GOD from his People, were to deny what they find and feel, written upon their Hearts, and upon their Way in a continued Tract of sad Experiences, now for a long Time; and yet whilst it is confessedly thus, How little ado is there for his Departings, even amongst these who are convinced, and do acknowledge that he is in a great Measure gone? Some Remembrance there is of a better Condition, whilst we did enjoy his Fellowship, and his Countenance did shine upon us, and some Light to discover our Loss, and the Evils that do attend it, which bring forth a sort of Desires to recover our former State; but these, how faint and feckless are they? and how many of us, are in a manner, content to live without God, and to suffer him to be gone, without taking hold on the Skirts
of

of his Garments? It may justly be said, *That we do fade as a Leaf, and that our Iniquities like the Wind do take us away*; and that there be few among us that call upon his Name, or stir up themselves to take hold on him; for *he hath hid his Face from us, and doth consume us, because of our Iniquities*: If his gracious Influences were strong upon our Hearts, we would not, we could not easily bruik his Departing, nor would we, or could we be satisfied, or hold our Peace, Night and Day, until he did return, and revive his Work, and renew his Strength, and repair the Ruins, and build up the Breaches of his People; And our sitting, almost satisfied, and silent under his withdrawals, doth say, *That many of us, tho' we have a name that we are living, yet we are dead*; and that the Spiritual Life which remains in others, is ready to die; which Things do say, *That our Gourd is withering at the Root, that Religion is wounded at the Heart, and smitten in its Vitals, in the Spiritual Powers of the Soul*; within which, if the LORD breath not from above, by pouring out of his Spirit from on high, will soon make any Fruit or Leaves of Profession that do remain without, to wither and decay, and leave us like *Nebuchadnezzar*, his Tree, which by the Command of the Watcher and holy One that came down from Heaven, was hewn down, and had its Branches cut, and its Leaves shaken, and its Fruit scattered, and the Beasts driven from under it, and the Fowls from its Branches, and the Stump of its Roots only left in the Earth, bound with a Band of Iron, and of Brass, until seven Times did pass over it.

Some Considerations soberly offered in Answer to these, who seem to entertain a fixed Perswasion, that God will not remove his Tabernacle from amongst us.



HERE be not a few who can hardly be induced to admit or entertain any Thoughts, that the LORD meaneth to remove his Tabernacle from *Scotland*, having received and someway fixed in their Bosoms, a kind of Perswasion to the contrary:

I would be loath to discourage the Hearts, or weaken the Hands of any, who do in a humble and sincere Way, and in Subordination to the Scripture Rule, desire to believe, that the LORD's Thoughts towards this poor Church and Land, are Thoughts of Peace, and not of Evil, to give us an expected End of all our Troubles and Fears, by making Mountains Plains, and crooked Things straight, and bringing forth the Head-stone of the Work of Reformation, causing his People to cry, Grace, grace unto it: Much less is it my Purpose to adventure upon the Secrets of GOD, or determine any Thing positively and peremptorily, either as to his continuing or removing of the Gospel; but I do believe, that upon sober and serious Search, it will be found, that many have taken up, and do entertain these Perswasions of GOD's abiding

abiding amongst us, with greater Confidence, than the Foundations upon which they build, the same can well bear up. In some they are meer Perswasions, of which they can scarcely render any Reason, unless it be, that they think so, or at the best, that they would fain have it so; others give some Grounds of their Perswasion anent this thing, especially these five. 1. The exceeding Riches and Freedom of the Grace and Love of G O D which he hath Days without Number, and at sundry Times, and diverse manners, manifested to this poor Church and Nation, redeeming us many hundred Years ago from the Bondage of brutish Ignorance, and heathenish Idolatry: And again, about one hundred of Years since, from the Bondage of Popery: And lately from the Bondage of Prelacy, and all these by a mighty Hand and out-stretched Arm, when we were not thinking of him, and were able to do nothing for our selves. 2. The late blessed Work of Reformation, whereby G O D was pleased to bring us in a solemn publick way in a sworn Covenant with himself, and to establish amongst us the Purity of his Ordinances, in Doctrine, Worship, Discipline and Government, and to own his Work by the Pouring forth of his Spirit, and many signal Testimonies of his lifted up Hand, against the Opposers, and for the Friends thereof, which Work must needs in the Perswasion of many, have a further Progress amongst us, because it is not his Manner to lay a Foundation, and not to build upon it, to begin a Work, and not to bring it to Perfection.

3. The many fervent and sincere Prayers and Supplications that have been put up to G O D, both by our Fore-fathers, worthy Men of G O D who lived in the preceeding Generation, and by many in this Generation, in order to the LORD's continuing to dwell in our Land, and making his Work

yet

yet more glorious in these Nations; which Prayers are yet before the Throne, and in a great Measure unanswered; and it cannot be that the Prayers of his People shall perish before him, who is the hearer of Prayer. 4. That there is a precious Remnant, and a holy Seed of converted gracious Souls in the Land, and that, as numerous at this Time, if not more numerous than at any Time, heretofore; and how can God remove from that Land, in which he hath so many Sons and Daughters. 5. That there is a select choice Number of able and Godly Ministers, sowing the immortal Seed of the Word Day by Day, in all the Quarters of the Land; which doth say that the LORD hath yet a Work and Harvest in *Scotland*: But from none of these singly, nor from more or all of them jointly, can we certainly draw any such Conclusion, that God is not about to remove his Tabernacle, and to depart from amongst us. All these things notwithstanding, he may come unto us quickly, and remove our Candlestick out of its Place; yea, many things there be that are sad and threatening Prognosticks, that the LORD purposeth so to do, even all these to which I have already spoke, besides sundry others that I have not mentioned: And as to these five Particulars, albeit I would be very loath to extenuate any of them, but do desire to stir up my self, and invite others unto a thankful Acknowledgement, and humble Admiration of the exceeding Riches of the goodness of God therein, and to improve the same so far as we are warranted of God unto the strengthening of our selves in Faith and in Duty; Yet in order to the awakning us from our Security, and putting us on to more wrestling with God, and more Watchfulness and Tenderness, and Diligence, and Zeal in our Duty, I desire it be considered. 1. That there is no particular

ticular Church upon Earth, that hath a Promise of
 GOD's dwelling and abiding with it for ever. The
 Church of *Rome* doth indeed pretend to it, but is found
 in all these Pretences to be a Liar, and a Deceiver,
 and that whilst she would make the Christian World
 to believe, that she is infallible, and built upon the
 Rock, against which the Gates of Hell shall not pre-
 vail: She is *Babylon* the great, the Mother of Harlots,
 and Abominations in the Earth. 2. That the Cove-
 nant of GOD with particular visible Churches, is con-
 ditional only, he promiseth that *he will be with them,*
whilst they are with him, 2 *Chron.* xv. 2. *Exod.* xix. 5.
Deut. xxix. 9, 10, 11, 12, 13. And therefore as he
 doth threaten to cast off particular Churches, because
 of their Barrenness, and Backsliding, and Breach of
 Covenant, and Disobedience, and Rebellion, *Deut.*
 xxix. 18, 19, 20, 21. *Isa.* v. 5, 6, 7. *Hos.* i. 6, 7,
 8, 9. *Hos.* ix. 17. *Matth.* xxi. 43. *Rev.* 2. 5. so hath
 he really and actually, because of these Sins, cast off
 the most famous and flourishing particular Churches
 that have been in the World, whom he did as emi-
 nently own, and for whom he did at sundry Times,
 and in divers Manners, as eminently appear in the
 Effects of his Power, and Mercy, and Grace, as ever
 he did own or appear for the Church of *Scotland*:
 Such as that famous Old Testament Church of *Israel*
 and *Judah*: That famous New Testament Church
 at *Jerusalem*, and sundry other of the famous Churches
 of *Asia*, *Africa*, and *Europe*: The Apostle *Paul* up-
 on Consideration of the holy Severity of GOD in this
 Matter, calleth upon us, *Not to be high minded, but*
to fear, that if God spared not the natural Branches,
lest he also shall not spare us, *Rom.* xi. 20, 21, 22.
 3. That there hath been solemn publick National
 Church Covenants attended with eminent Pieces of
 Reformation, in Doctrine, Worship, Discipline, and
 Government, and with signal Appearances of GOD,

in

in more than ordinary Works of Providence, for countenancing and carrying on of the same; and that these have been extended to neighbour Churches and Nations to begin a Reformation there also: And yet Desolation and Darknes hath followed shortly upon the back of all these Things: Such Covenants, and Reformations, and Providences of God there were in *Judah*, in the Days of these two good Kings, *Hezekiah* and *Josiah*, which were also extended to many in *Israel*, as may be read, *2 Chron. Chap. xxix. Chap. xxx. Chap. xxxi. Chap. xxxiv. Chap. xxxv.* And, *2 Kings Chap. xxix.* and yet we know what followed upon the back of these Things, in the Days of *Manasseh*, *2 Kings Chap. xxi. 2 Chron. Chap. xxiii.* and in the Days of *Jehoiakim* and *Zedekiah* Kings of *Judah*, *2 Chron. Chap. xxxvi.* Yea, the Scriptures testifie, that fiery Trials, and sad Dispensations, commonly do befall the Church of God, upon the back of eminent Mercies and Blessings on his Part, and great and solemn Engagements and Undertakings upon her Part. The Wisdom of God so dispensing, partly for the Trial and Proof of the Faith and Patience of such as are upright in their Hearts, and partly for discovering of Hypocrites, and punishing of these who dealeth falsly in his Covenant. Such Things befell to *Israel* in the Wildernes, after their coming out of *Egypt*, and through the Red-Sea, and the L O R D's giving of the Law and Covenanting with them at Mount *Sinai*, as may be read in the Books of *Exodus*, *Numbers*, and *Deuteronomy*; and to the Ten Tribes after the Days of *David* and of *Solomon*, and to the Church of *Judah* in the Days of *Manasseh*, *Ammon*, *Jehojakim*, &c. as may be read in the Books of the *Kings* and *Chronicles*. And such Things came upon many of the Churches of Christ, not long after their first planting, and afterwards, as may be read in the *Acts* and Writings of the Apostles, and in the Story

of the Church downward, unto our Days. 4. That it is hard to determine how far the LORD answereth the Prayers, and satisfieth the Desires of his Servants and People, in order to the State and Condition of a particular visible Church, and to the continuing of his Gospel, and Ordinances therein. They do oftentimes (no doubt) desire and pray, That the Sun of Righteousness may never go down upon the Church, whereof they are Members, and that his Ordinances may be continued therein till many Generations, yea, till Time shall be no more. And yet it cannot be said, that the Lord satisfieth these Desires, or answereth their Prayers in that particular, as to such a length of Time, because Experience telleth us, That he doth oftentimes remove his Candlestick from particular Churches, where his Servants and People have prayed much to the contrary. Neither yet doth it follow, that they seek him in vain, because, as they are accepted of God, in being faithful in this Piece of their Duty, so doth he ordinarily grant much more as to the Substance, even of the Things which they do desire, than may abundantly Witness the Tender Respect he hath, and the gracious Recompense he doth allow unto the Travel of their Souls in these Particulars. The LORD hath already done so much in *Scotland*, as may justly be esteemed a bountiful Return of all the Prayers of his Servants and People therein, tho' they had been a Thousand Times more than they have been. 5. That as we must not measure the Perfection of the Works of GOD, by the Line of our Imagination and Reason, but by his own holy Purposes and Ends; So the great Work which GOD mainly intendeth in his Appearances in visible Churches, and which he accomplisheth and bringeth to Perfection, is not such a Pitch and Continuance of the Purity of Ordinances and outward Reformation, but the gathering of his Saints, and the perfecting

fecting of the invisible Body of Christ: Unto this all his Dispensations in the Ordinances, and outward Administrations are subordinated, and so proportioned, for Measure and Length of Time, as may bring forth this great End: And when this is done, I mean, when the whole Number of select chosen Ones, whom the LORD meaneth effectually to call in a Land, are gathered home to himself, then commonly he taketh down his Tabernacle, and is gone, as having done his great Business for which he sent his Gospel amongst a People. And therefore though he should be quickly gone from amongst us, we cannot justly say, That he hath laid a Foundation, and not built upon it, or that he hath begun a Work, and not brought it to Perfection, seeing we do not know but that he hath accomplished, or is near about to accomplish his own holy Purposes and Ends, and dispensing such a Measure and Length of Ordinances, and outward Administrations for that Effect. 6. That the LORD sometimes sendeth forth not a few burning Lights, and gathereth not a few Souls unto himself, immediately before his Departing from a Land, as the Sun sometimes shineth brightly, and maketh a clear and warm Evening, immediately before the setting and going down thereof: A Company of able and faithful Ministers, and a Harvest of Saints, are indeed sometimes the Evidences of the *Days-spring visiting from on high, and of the Sun of Righteousness going forth as a Bridegroom from his Chamber, and rejoycing as a strong Man to run his Race*: But sometimes they are as the Tokens of his last Farewell, so it was amongst the *Jews* in the Days of the Apostles, the LORD sent amongst them many of his Servants to preach the Gospel unto them, and many Thousands of them were converted and did believe, *Acts xxi. 20.* and yet within a few Years thereafter, *He did finish his*

Work, and cut it short in Righteousness amongst that People, as the Apostle speaketh, Rom. ix. 28. 7. That the LORD, tho' he do not utterly remove a Churches Candlestick, but hath into it a Remnant, both of a faithful Ministry, and of Saints; yet he doth sometimes visit with very darkning, and ruining, and desolating Dispensations for many Years together; so he did unto the Church of Israel, in the younger Years of Samuel the Prophet, by forsaking the Tabernacle of Shiloh, the Tent which he placed among Men; and delivering his Strength into Captivity, and his Glory into the Enemies hand, Psal. lxxviii. 60, 61. And unto the Church of Judah in the Days of the Prophet Jeremiah, by bringing upon them the King of the Chaldees, who slew their young Men with the Sword, in the House of their Sanctuary, and had no Compassion upon young Man or Maiden, old Man, or him that stooped for Age: the Lord gave them all into his Hand. And all the Vessels of the House of God, great and small, and the Treasures of the House of the LORD, and the Treasures of the King, and of his Princes; all these he brought to Babylon. And they burnt the House of God, and brake down the Wall of Jerusalem, and burnt all the Places thereof with Fire, and destroyed all the goodly Vessels thereof. And them that had escaped from the Sword, carried he away to Babylon: where they were Servants to him and his Sons, until the Reign of the Kingdom of Persia, 2Chron. xxxvi. 17, 18, 19, 20, 21. And this did God also to most of the Churches in Europe, for some hundreds of Years together under Popery, before Luther's Time: And thus also hath he done to most of the Churches of Asia and Africa, under the Turk; and other Mahumetan Princes: And thus he did unto the Church of England not long ago, after the Death of Edward the sixth, during the Reign of Queen

Queen *Mary*: And do not his present Dispensations in a great Measure speak, that he meaneth thus to do unto us also? 8. We will not find many Instances (if any) of visible Churches, enjoying the Ordinances for any long Time together, in Purity and Peace, such is the Mixture and Leaven of Hypocrisie and Corruption that is within, and the Fire of Enmity and Malice that is without: That it is a rare Thing for a Church for one compleat Century of Years together, either not to be infected with Heresie and Error, or not to be trodden down of Persecution. The Church of the *Jews*, which was one of the most permanent and longest lived, as continuing from *Abraham* till some Years after the Death of Christ; yet what a various Lot did she run, almost in every Generation, sometimes by the Spirit of Error, and sometimes by the Spirit of Persecution, and sometimes by both at once? These Things being duly considered, and it being thereunto added, That *Scotland* hath now for a long Time enjoyed the Light and Liberty of the Gospel: And that notwithstanding of all the Goodness of *G O D*, in sending and continuing it amongst us, and of all our Engagements to reform our Ways, and to walk answerably unto the same: Yet our Ignorance, and Barrenness, and Looseness, is great exceedingly, and our Backslidings and Provocations are many: Is there not much Cause to fear that our Sun may be near the setting, and a Night of Darkness and Desolation at our Door, by the *L O R D*'s removing of our Candlestick; at least, by sending a black and sad eclipse for a Time, especially, there being such sad Prognosticks and Threatnings for Tokens of it?

A
DISCOVERY,
Of the true
STATE
OF THE

*Difference betwixt the Town-Council, and
the Kirk-Session, and of the Misrepre-
sentation hereof, and some ill grounded
Alledgeances thereabout, contained in
a Paper communicated unto the People
under the Hand of the Clerk of the
Town-Council.*

THE true State of the Difference, is not
as is insinuate in that Paper, whether
any besides the Minister and Elders should
have any Hand in the Nomination of
the Elders, and Calling of a Minister, because it
hath been often times offered to the Town-Council,
That if they had any just Ground of Grievance
or

or Objection, against any Member of the Session, that it should be taken in Consideration and judged impartially; And that if the Council did so desire, there should be a greater Number of Elders named by the Session, in an orderly way, and according to the Discipline of the Kirk, whose names should be intimated publickly to the whole Congregation, that if no relevant Exception were propounded, against them, they might be added to the Session, and because the Session have again and again, by sundry Messages to the Town-Council very earnestly desired, That the Council and they might meet together for condescending upon and Calling of a Minister in an unanimous Way, and by the joint Consent and Concurrence of both; but the Town-Council did always most peremptorily refuse to meet with the Session or any Member of the Session except the Minister, in Order to that Business; yea, sundries of them would not so much as once speak in the Business, when any of the Elders were named, to speak with them thereanent, but did run out at Doors so soon they came in.

THE true State and main Ground of the Difference, is, the Town-Council's refusing to acknowledge the Session, pretending that they are not a lawful and rightly constitute Session, that so they may have some Shadow of Pretext for denying unto them the Nomination and Choice of a Minister, and for taking it into their own Hands: Which things are the more strange, seeing the Session were not only Chosen in an orderly Way, and publickly admitted and sworn unto their Office by that pious and godly Man Mr. *David Bennet*, late Minister of this Congregation;

gation; but also, have been in the constant Possession and Exercise thereof, now for four Years past, and that the haill Congregation have without Question or Exception made by any of them, been constantly subject to their Discipline, and that sundry of the Magistrates and Town-Council themselves, being then Members of the former Session, were consenting and concurring in their Election, and that none of them did ever heretofore decline or disclaim them, but have often concurred to cause the Inhabitants of the Town in case of Disobedience to compear before them; And have upon Representations from them proceeded to civil Censures against sundry Delinquents: What then can be intended by denying them now to be a Session, but the taking out of their Hands the Trust committed unto them of G O D, and by the Discipline of the Kirk, and Laws of the Land in the Nomination of a Minister, that so a more easy way may be made to the Purpose of those who would name a Man according to their own Heart, and in a way contrary to the standing Order and Discipline of the Kirk, which all of us by Covenant are sworn to maintain.

N E X T, It would be considered how unjustly it is alledged in that Paper, That Mr. *James Guthrie* had sent an Act of Session to the Council, desiring that they may in all things condescend to him, but bearing no Condescendence on his Part.

T H E R E is no such Desire in that Act of Session, nor any thing that may import the same; As would have soon appeared, if that Act had been read to the People with that other Paper. Mr. *James Guthrie* hath in sundry things that concern

this Business condescended very far to the Council. As first, He was willing that the Choice of a Minister, should have been delayed for a while, until all Parties concerned therein, might have had Time to think upon it at Leisure, providing that the Town-Council would have allowed something in the mean time to an able and Godly Expectant who might have born some of the Burden in the frequent Diets of the Preaching, but they would not condescend to allow any thing that way, or that any Expectant should be named for that End, and how unfit it were that the People should have wanted Preaching at the ordinary Diets, any may judge; As also, how improbable it is, that he can bear all the Burden alone. Second, He and the Session did so far condescend to the Council, that they were most willing, and earnestly desirous to meet with them about the Choice of a Minister, and to proceed therein by mutual Help and Concurrence and Consent. Third, Albeit the Council's questioning the Constitution of the Session, was very unreasonable and ill Grounded, yet when they did propone, that that Business and the choosing of a Minister, might be absolutely submitted to four Ministers, they did so far condescend, that they were willing to concur in writing to these Ministers, and to hearken to their Advice, so far as the same should be agreeable to the Word of G o d, and the Discipline of this Kirk, which is as much as any can justly condescend unto, by way of Submission in a Matter of Conscience and Religion. And here it would be considered, whether those who do oppose the Session in this Business, be indeed pressed in their Consciences as before G o d so to do, seeing that they themselves do without any Condition,

tion, or Restriction, as to what is to be determined, offer an absolute Submission of the hail Business, and to engage themselves to stand to the Sentence of these Men, whatever it shall be, if they be indeed convinced in their Conscience upon good Grounds, from the Word of **G O D** (which is the Rule by which Men ought to judge and walk in these Matters) that the present Session is not a lawful and rightly constitute Session, or that they have proceeded in a wrong way, in the Choice of a Minister, or have named one who is not fit for the Charge. How can they, without sinning against **G O D**, bind themselves to the Sentence of any Man, though never so judicious and godly, that shall determine in any thing to the contrary; and if they be not really convinced in their Consciences of these things, how can they without offending of **G O D**, make such Opposition thereto, and such Trouble and Division thereanent, or do they think, that the Constitution of a Kirk-Session, and the choosing of a Minister of the Gospel, are but as Civil-Bargains, which Men may submit; and upon which they may cut and carve at their own Pleasure, or at the Pleasure of others: No Man that has learned **J E S U S C H R I S T**, will so judge.

Lastly, **I T** would be considered, That tho' there be many in the Town-Council, and amongst the Merchants and Trades, who do not intend any such thing, yet there be sundry who are drawing on a Design for bringing in some of these Ministers who hath been formerly censured by the Judicatories of the Kirk, for their Malignant and scandalous Carriage: Which Design if it take Effect, will not only tend exceedingly to the Hindrance

drance of the Gospel, and to the Hurt of Souls in this Place, but will also set up three Ministers in this Place, of very contrary and opposite Judgments and ways, which cannot but have very bad Effects amongst the People, even in those things that concern the Wealth and Peace of the Town. And therefore it is most earnestly desired, and it doth much concern the Magistrates and Town-Council, and all the Members of the Congregation, not to suffer themselves to be posselt with any unjust Prejudice, or groundless Alledgance against the Minister and Kirk-Session, nor to refuse their own Mercies in opposing or denying to concur to call that able and godly Man Mr. *Robert Rule*, who has a Testimony in their own Consciences that he is fit to be their Minister: But that seeing the LORD offers so fit an Opportunity that they would all of them make Choice thereof, and concur to give him a Call, which will contribute much for the promoting of Godliness, and intertaining of Peace and Love in this Congregation. *Sic. Subr.*

Mr. *JAMES GUTHRIE*,

In Name of the KIRK SESSION.

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